■ **Entertainment / A2-1**

Sharon's inspiring wish-fulfillment birthday party

■ **Business / B1**

Peso hits 8-month high at 55.46 to $1

■ **Lifestyle / D1**

Princess Caroline's RP visit fills up pages of publicity in Europe

■ **News/ A2**

Purisima is finance chief; Juan Santos wooed to head DTI

■ **Sports / A25**

Le Bron becomes youngest player to score triple-double in NBA history

Echegaray's widow dies but hospital keeping body

By Norman Bordadora

THE WIDOW of the first convict to die of lethal injection since the reimposition of the death penalty in the country herself died on Wednesday night after bursting a blood vessel on Jan. 9 because of severe high blood pressure.

ECHEGARAY'S/ A20

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

If all else fails, smile to break Guinness world record

By Christian Esguerra

IF ALL else fails, smile.

Take it from some 36,000 Filipinos whose pictures have been included in a photo mosaic of smiling faces sched-

IF ALL/ A20

KASALI AKO DAPAT DYAN!

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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website: www.inq7.net

'Freedom through peace'

FOUR for history, President George W. Bush flanked by his wife, Laura, and Vice President Dick Cheney and his wife, Lynne, go on stage at the end of the inaugural eve pageantry that included a "Celebration of Freedom" concert, three candlelight dinners and fireworks exploding over the White House.

COMPOSITE AP PHOTO

Bush inaugural speech 'inspiring'

WASHINGTON—In a city brimming with pageantry under fortress-like security, George W. Bush on Thursday began Chapter Two of his presidency with a call "from beyond the stars" to stand steadfastly for the cause of freedom around the world.

In his inaugural address, Bush told America that events and common sense had led him to one conclusion: "The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world."

On Wednesday evening just before red, white, blue and gold fireworks showered the dark sky over the National Mall, Bush summed up his inaugural message with one word: "Freedom."

"This is a cause that unites our country and gives hope to the world," he said.

Then, reaching to his religious faith, Bush continued: "We have a calling from beyond the stars to stand for freedom, and America will always be faithful to that cause."

Inauguration is a time of unity and a time to talk about hope, Bush said, amid unsettling threats from terrorists and anxiety about the steady uptick of

FREEDOM/ A19

Guingona back in GMA camp, gets China post

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

THEY buried the hatchet, swallowed the bitter words and became allies again.

More than two years after quitting the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo due to differences over US military presence in the country, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. has been named ambassador to China.

"The appointment was done in the best interest of the country," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in justifying Guingona's appoint-

GUINGONA/ A7

Miriam rues colonial mentality, seeks VFA review

By Christine O. Avendaño

SEN. MIRIAM Defensor-Santiago yesterday lamented the colonial mentality that, she said, still existed among Filipinos as indicated by a recent BBC World Service global opinion poll.

"We are still colonial in many ways, and that survey result is an indication of this unfortunate development," Santiago told reporters in reaction to the survey showing that among 21 nations, only the Philippines, India and Poland were supportive of US President George W. Bush.

She noted that the rest of the world viewed Bush's reelection as a danger "because it has substantial grounds" to be so.

The senator, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee and an expert in international law, said she, for one, was "aghast" by Bush's decision last year to invade Iraq as "preemptive self-defense."

She said preemptive self-defense had never been validated in international law, thus making the US president "a danger

MIRIAM/ A8

Not our study, not our corruption list, ADB clarifies

THE ASIAN Development Bank yesterday said that it did not conduct the study that found the Philippines ranked second to Bangladesh when it came to the magnitude of bribery or irregular payments in public contracts.

In the third edition of the INQUIRER issue on Jan. 20, the banner story said: "A study conducted by the Asian Development Bank showed the Philippines ranked second to Bangladesh among 102 countries in terms of the magnitude of irregular payments, including bribery, in public contracts."

In a letter to the INQUIRER, Dalisay S. Maligalig, statistician at the ADB Development Indicators and Policy Research Division, said: "Although this was cited in the full report of the ADB study, this finding was taken from the Global Competitiveness Report (GCR2003/04) and was based on the Annual Executive Opinion Survey conducted by the World Economic Forum."

Maligalig said the ADB study was a survey of establishments conducted only in the Philippines. "However, to provide a broad indication of how the Philippines has fared relative to other Asian developing countries, we performed comparative analysis using similar surveys that were conducted in other countries."

"Also, we used the findings of GCR as well as those of the World bank's Business Environment Survey and Doing

NOT OUR/ A8

40TH DAY

Susan links up with Poe's 3 kids

By Fe Zamora

IT WAS a beautiful scene. Better than the movies.

There was "Ms Roces, a picture of matriarchal grace and compassion."

This was how a source described what the widow Susan Roces did only hours after Fernando Poe Jr. was laid to rest.

Roces gathered Poe's three children and had them introduced to all their cousins by their daughter, Mary Grace, an aide of the defeated presidential candidate said yesterday.

Roces invited Poe's two sons and one daughter, namely, Michael Jordan, Ronian and Lovey, to lunch at a restaurant in Chinatown, and later brought them to the FPJ Studios in Quezon City where they were also formally introduced to the management and staff as "the children of FPJ," the source told the INQUIRER.

Aside from Ronian, who had been publicly acknowledged by Poe as his son during the election campaign, it was the first time his two other children were brought forward.

Roces' magnanimous gesture to bring her husband's children into the fold has yet to be extended to the fractious political opposition, from which she has consistently kept her distance.

In commemoration of the 40th day of mourning for her husband on Saturday, Roces has opted to hold a Mass exclusively for her family while her husband's political supporters have scheduled a concelebrated Mass

SUSAN/ A19

GMA calls for 'new kind of people power'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SPENDING the fourth anniversary of her installation as Chief Executive with the poor in Mandaluyong City, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called for a "new kind of people power" to enable her to complete her programs.

Ms Arroyo said she was commemorating the Edsa II revolt that toppled President Joseph Estrada and swept her to the presidency with a monthlong "De Soto Tour" of socialized housing projects for the poor.

She has adopted Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto's principle of empowering the poor by recognizing their assets, principally the land they are occupying, as collateral for loans for small businesses.

The President also marked the day by giving a lengthy interview to dzEC and Net 25, stations owned by the politically influential Iglesia ni Cristo, which sup-

GMA CALLS/ A8

EDSA II in action: President Arroyo marks the 4th anniversary of People Power that swept her into the highest position in the land with month-long visits to poor communities like Barangay Addition Hills in Mandaluyong where she's warmly welcomed.

EDWIN BACASMAS

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/21/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

No PNP extension for Aglipay

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christian Esguerra

THOSE aspiring to the leadership of the Philippine National Police can heave a sigh of relief.

There will be a new PNP chief come March after President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday she was not extending PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay's term.

"He himself said he was not asking for an extension," Ms Arroyo said in an interview over television Net 25 and radio dzEC of the Iglesia ni Cristo.

Ms Arroyo acknowledged that it was not good practice to extend the term of PNP officials, but said that they should serve at least six months. She said this was the reason she extended Aglipay's term which expired in September 2004 when he turned 56. By March, Aglipay would have served seven months as PNP chief.

Ms Arroyo also said she was satisfied with Aglipay's stewardship of the police force.

'Good record'

"He has a good record. He would serve for a total of seven months and he has done good within that period, so I think he is quite fulfilled. And I read in the newspaper that he is not asking for an extension," she said.

Top police generals vying for Aglipay's job expressed satisfaction over the President's announcement.

"That's the right thing to do," said one general considered to be a top contender for the post.

AGLIPAY

The development "calmed" the quiet unrest among other generals previously in the dark about Aglipay's plans, another official said.

"Now it's clear that this is really the end of his term," he said. Aglipay's extension expires on March 13.

But the Malacañang announcement did not necessarily mean there would be an end to term extensions as a way of accommodating officials with six months or less to go in the service, another senior officer said.

An extension, he noted, would not be far-fetched if Aglipay's successor were to be picked from among his classmates in Philippine Military Academy Class '71 who are still in active service.

Considered top choices from this crop are Deputy Director Generals Virtus Gil, Reynaldo Velasco and Ricardo de Leon and Director Rolando Garcia.

If President Arroyo chooses between Gil and Velasco, a term extension would definitely be unavoidable. Gil will reach the mandatory retirement age of 56 on March 14, one day after Aglipay's term expires, and Velasco on May 22.

If picked, De Leon would have nearly six months to serve since he is retiring on Sept. 10. Garcia would have nine months with his 56th birthday coming up on Dec. 4.

Elbowed out

But observers said Garcia may have been elbowed out of the race after Aglipay assigned him to the Philippine Center for Transnational Crime (PCTC) during the recent PNP revamp.

Although the PCTC is a major assignment, many PNP generals consider it a "freezer" for "floating" officials. De Leon was its director before he was appointed to his present position as chief of the PNP Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force.

That, too, was considered a "demotion" by his peers since a task force is supposedly beneath De Leon's stature as a three-star general.

Said to be a "dark horse" is Director Arturo Lomibao, a PMA '72 graduate. His appointment in the last revamp as chief of the directorial staff was reportedly meant to "position" him to be Aglipay's successor. It's the PNP's fourth highest post.

Other senior officials are also wary of Director Avelino Razon Jr. who, at 52, is the youngest two-star general.

A member of PMA Class '74, he has been very visible as director of the National Capital Region Police Office, a highly coveted post among PNP generals largely because of the public and media exposure.

RP embassy staff staying put in Iraq

By TJ Burgonio

DESPITE the risks, the lean team of officials manning the Philippine embassy in Iraq has opted to stay put to carry out contingency plans for the 6,000 Filipino workers in case the violence in the strife-torn state worsens, officials said yesterday.

The four-man Iraq team, led by Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, has "volunteered" to remain in Baghdad amid the escalating violence in the run-up to the Jan. 30 Iraqi elections, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said.

"We continue to monitor that (alert level in camps). That's why both Undersecretary Seguis and [Charge d'Affaires] Eric Endaya and their staff remain there and the labor attaché," he said, reacting to reports that the team had pulled out of Iraq.

A TV report of the pullout had riled some officials, charging that this had created the impression that Seguis and company had abandoned the workers, spread out in US military camps, and hostage Robert Tarongoy, who was snatched Nov. 1 last year.

Seguis himself called officials in Manila by satellite phone late Wednesday to say that the Iraq team "continues its work in Baghdad to seek the freedom of Robert Tarongoy," spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said.

The team continues to work at the embassy at daytime, but stays at another, much safer place in the capital, officials said, but declined to give specifics.

"I'm always telling them that we're also concerned about their security and safety. But you know, my hat's off to them because in fact I didn't have to ask them. They volunteered to stay," Romulo said.

Romulo said that Seguis and the rest were closely monitoring the situation inside the US installations so they would know when to implement the contingency plans, including an evacuation in a worst-case scenario.

"We have contingency plans and they're well aware... Some of them (workers) have expressed (interest in) repatriation. There were 23 who were repatriated recently. So that contingency program continues," he said.

The contingency plan was activated four months ago, he said.

Purisima named finance chief

PURISIMA

MALACAÑANG has appointed Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima to take over the Department of Finance effective February, INQUIRER sources confirmed yesterday.

Purisima has agreed to take the place of Juanita Amatong who is due for retirement.

Sources said Purisima, who had earlier wanted to quit the Cabinet, was chosen by the Palace because he enjoyed high credibility among local businessmen and foreign investors.

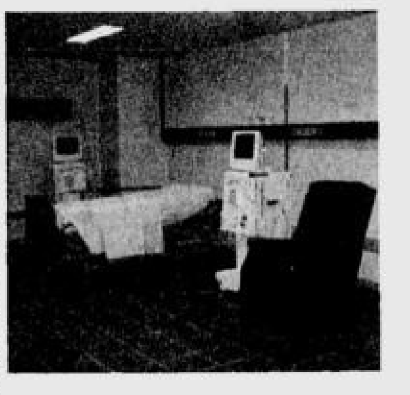
Prior to the trade post, Purisima was chair of accounting firm Sycip, Gorres, Velayo and Co.

Other sources said Malacañang was now talking to Juan Santos, former chief of Nestlé Philippines, to take over from Purisima at the Department of Trade and Industry.

—Doris Dumlao

The Philippine General Hospital inaugurates its new Dialysis Unit today

9 other projects to be showcased



The Philippine General Hospital (PGH) "raises the bar" and moves another step forward with the inauguration and blessing of its 14-bed new dialysis unit at the 6th floor of the Central Block. The unit can accommodate up to 42 patients at full capacity. With the help of various philanthropists, the old facility was completely redesigned and refurbished to provide better patient comfort and personnel mobility; these translate to more efficient dialysis services. The new infrastructure is complemented by a 7-step comprehensive reverse osmosis (RO) water treatment system.

Fifteen (15) brand new fifth generation B. Braun Dialog Plus machines have been acquired by PGH to ensure quality dialysis treatments. Two dialysis reprocessors meant to further improve dialysis efficiency and cut costs will also become available courtesy of Hon. Manuel B. Villar's Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

A DIAPACT continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT) machine, for hemodynamically unstable patients or critically-ill patients in intensive care, is also one of the new equipment in the unit.

The inauguration of the new Dialysis Unit signals the PGH Administration's thrust of modernizing, upgrading, rehabilitating and reinventing the hospital in the next two years in preparation for PGH Centennial Celebrations 2007. Next to be operationalized are the Jose Rizal National Eye Referral Center, the Medical Arts Center, the Computerization of Cost Centers (Pharmacy, Billing and Collection, etc.) and the 2-megawatt generator set. Other flagship projects include the hotelization of the Pay Wards, renovation of the Main Pharmacy, rehabilitation of the Nurses' Home, rehabilitation of the Dietary Building, computerization of Medical Records, and overall physical plant rehabilitation of the 125,000 square meter PGH compound.

9 Other Projects for launching, blessing and inauguration on January 21, 2005

Guest of Honor: **Francisco Nemenzo**
President, UP System

1. Computerization Project Phase I
2. Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory Recovery Room
3. PGH Public Pay toilet # 2, ER Complex
4. Repainted PGH Façade
5. Landscaped PGH OPD Back Garden
6. Landscaped PGH Creche Garden
7. Reroofed PGH Administration Offices
8. Renovated Cash / Accounting Offices
9. Renovated Medical Intensive Care Unit

Officers of Administration

President, UP System	DR. FRANCISCO NEMENZO
Chancellor, UP Manila	DR. MARITA V T REYES
Director, Philippine General Hospital	DR. CARMELO A ALFILER
Dean, UP College of Medicine	DR. CECILIA V TOMAS

Director's Expanded Executive Committee

Deputy Director for Administration Services	DR.EDWARD C TORDESILLAS
Deputy Director for Fiscal Services	DR.HERMINIA L CIFRA
Deputy Director for Health Operations	DR.MARIO R FESTIN
Deputy Director for Nursing Services	MS.RITA V TAMSE
Coordinator for Flagship & Priority Projects	DR.MELFRED L. HERNANDEZ
Coordinator for Resource Generation	DR. VIRGILIO M NOVERO, JR.
Coordinator for Training & Research	DR.RODNEY B DOFITAS
Coordinator for Hospital Services	DR.BENJAMIN P SABLAN, JR.
Asst. to the Director for Public Affairs & PGH Spokesperson	DR.MICHAEL L TEE
Asst. to the Director for Special Executive Concerns	DR.CESAR A PEREZ, JR.
Executive Secretary/Administrative Officer	MS.NELY P VEA

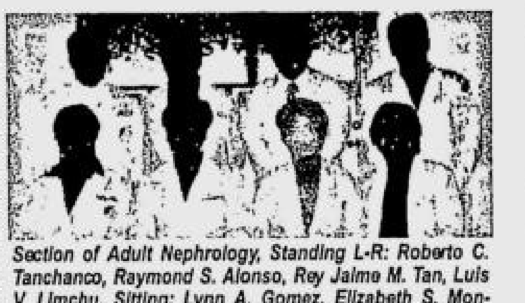
Contact Numbers

PGH Trunkline	(02) 521-8450
Direct Line, Director's Office	(02) 523-7123
Telefax, Director's Office	(02) 524-2221
Email address	publicaffairs@pgh.gov.ph
Website	www.pgh.gov.ph
Dialysis Unit	
Adult	(02) 5218450 local 3621/3622
Pediatric	(02) 5218450 local 2111

B|BRAUN
SHARING EXPERTISE

College of Medicine - Philippine General Hospital
University of the Philippines Manila
Sections of Adult & Pediatric Nephrology

Adult Nephrology



Section of Adult Nephrology, Standing L-R: Roberto C. Tanchanco, Raymond S. Alonso, Rey Jaime M. Tan, Luis V. Limchu, Sitting: Lynn A. Gomez, Elizabeth S. Montemayor, Agnes D. Mejia, .Coralie D. Dimacali and Irmingarda P. Gueco (not in picture)

Highly respected faculty of UP College of Medicine and Philippine General Hospital compose the Section of Adult Nephrology one of the subspecialty sections of the Department of Medicine. Throughout its 30-year existence, the section has consistently delivered on training, service and research. The Section attends to the needs of the kidney patients of the country's largest tertiary hospital in both Pay and Charity services, including the General Medicine wards, intensive care unit, and referrals from Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology and other departments. The section provides quality care to all patients with renal disease or kidney-related conditions, providing expertise in the diagnosis and management of: Acute and Chronic Renal failure, Acid-base imbalance, Electrolyte problems, Volume homeostasis, and Special poisoning cases. It addresses the specific needs of the patients in terms of diagnosis and treatment of their renal disease and renal replacement therapy. It offers kidney biopsies, the cornerstone for diagnosis of many kidney diseases, at rates that have remained among the most affordable in the country. The three main modes of renal replacement therapy are available: hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis and kidney transplantation. SLED, CRRT and other modified hemodialysis procedures are available to all in-patients. In addition to offering acute peritoneal dialysis, the section can initiate chronic ambulatory, intermittent peritoneal dialysis, and cyclic peritoneal dialysis. Attendant to the aforementioned procedures are the venous catheter / access placements (femoral, internal jugular or subclavian) and insertion of "stiff" or peritocatheters for peritoneal dialysis. The section screens potential kidney donors, medically prepares the transplant recipient, actively manages their perioperative hospital stay and is responsible for their long term follow-up.

For its teaching and training role, the section has developed an undergraduate medical curricular program that is integrated with Physiology, Pathology, Urology, Pediatrics, Family Medicine and Pharmacology complete with study guides and self-instructional modules. The integration forms part of the new general UP College of Medicine curriculum on Organ Systems Integration.

Since its first nephrology fellow graduated in 1977 the section has since produced 63 compassionate, ethical, professional, knowledgeable and skilled nephrologists serving Filipinos in the country's different regions. Its commitment to scholarship is manifest in its numerous investigations and researches in renal medicine.

Its community orientation is manifest in medical educational courses offered to provincial government physicians where disease prevention is emphasized. The section also makes an effort to educate patients with chronic kidney disease and their families on the nature of the disease and the available treatment options and support system for them through its monthly Chronic Renal Disease Class. This monthly lay forum has evolved into a multidisciplinary effort to also address the psychosocial facet of the illness. The present set-up involves the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, the Medical Social Service, the Transplant Unit, and the Department of Psychiatry. (Contact number: 523-0215 direct line / 521-8450 local 3621 / 3622)

Pediatric Nephrology

Section of Pediatric Nephrology, UP-PGH(L to R) Dolores D. Bonzon, Carmelo A. Alfiler, Joel S. Elises (Section Head), Francisco E. Anacleto

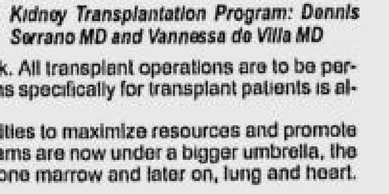
Staffed by highly competent faculty of the UP College of Medicine and Philippine General Hospital, the Section of Pediatric Nephrology of the Philippine General Hospital delivers the highest quality medical care for children with kidney diseases including some of the most complex medical and surgical cases. With approximately 2000 consults and admissions annually, it has the largest and most experienced Pediatric Dialysis Program in the country, and one of the first and foremost institutions of its kind. The section offers all forms of dialysis for infants, children, and adolescents with kidney failure; hemo- or home peritoneal dialysis (currently, more than 20 pediatric patients); and kidney transplantation.

Since 1991 the center has been the leader in the evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney disorders of infants, children and adolescents including:

- Birth defects of the urinary and kidney system
- Infections of the kidneys and urinary tract
- Elevated blood pressure
- Blood and protein in the urine
- Chronic kidney failure
- Genetic kidney diseases
- Systemic lupus erythematosus
- Nephrotic syndrome
- Cystic kidney disease
- Nephritis
- Kidney stones
- Acidosis and electrolyte disorders
- Early prevention of diabetic kidney disease

In addition, the section is a leader in international and national clinical investigations into the treatment of the major kidney disorders in children.(Contact number: 521-8450 loc. 2111)

The Kidney Transplantation Program and The Integrated Organ Transplant Unit



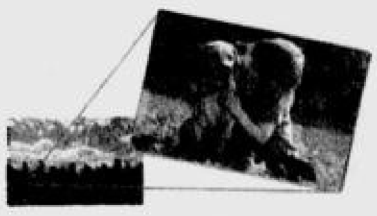
Kidney Transplantation Program: Dennis Serrano MD and Vannessa de Villa MD

The Kidney Transplantation Program (KTP) of the University of the Philippines Manila - Philippine General Hospital was initiated in 1993, soon after the creation of the Division of Organ of Transplantation of the Department of Surgery. The KTP is actually a revival of the pioneering kidney transplantation activity in our hospital in the 70s which halted after the National Kidney Institute became operational. However, with the increasing number of ESRD patients in our country today and the growing demand for organ replacement as an alternative to lifelong dialysis for selected patients, we found the need to once again be able to offer the therapeutic option of transplantation. The Transplant Unit, revived by Dr. Enrique T. Ona and presently headed by Dr. Vanessa H. de Villa, has since performed more than 130 kidney transplant operations, majority with grafts from living donors. It has served not only patients from Metro Manila but from all over the country. Efforts are underway to seek more funding to be able to subsidize a greater number of transplant candidates by improving our ancillary services and promoting transplantation using grafts from deceased donors. The initiation of liver transplantation is also among the short-term goals of the Transplant Division. Aside from a new dialysis unit our improved facilities include the new Cardiovascular and Transplant Surgery Unit located at the 6th floor of the Left Central Block. All transplant operations are to be performed in this specialized surgical suite once it is fully operational. Rehabilitation of hospital rooms specifically for transplant patients is also among the plans for expansion.

In line with the current PGH Administration thrust to integrate diagnostic and therapeutic facilities to maximize resources and promote interdisciplinary comprehensive patient management, the kidney and liver transplantation programs are now under a bigger umbrella, the Integrated Organ Transplant Unit (IOTU), together with the transplant program for skin, bone, bone marrow and later on, lung and heart. IOTU is also headed by Dr. Vanessa de Villa. (Contact #: 521-8450 loc. 3600)

ADVT.

NEW WAYS TO ENJOY VIDEO



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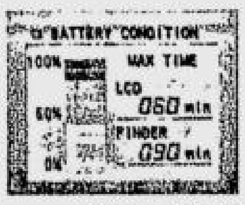

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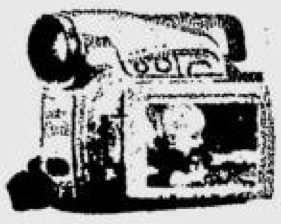

GR-D290

GR-D250

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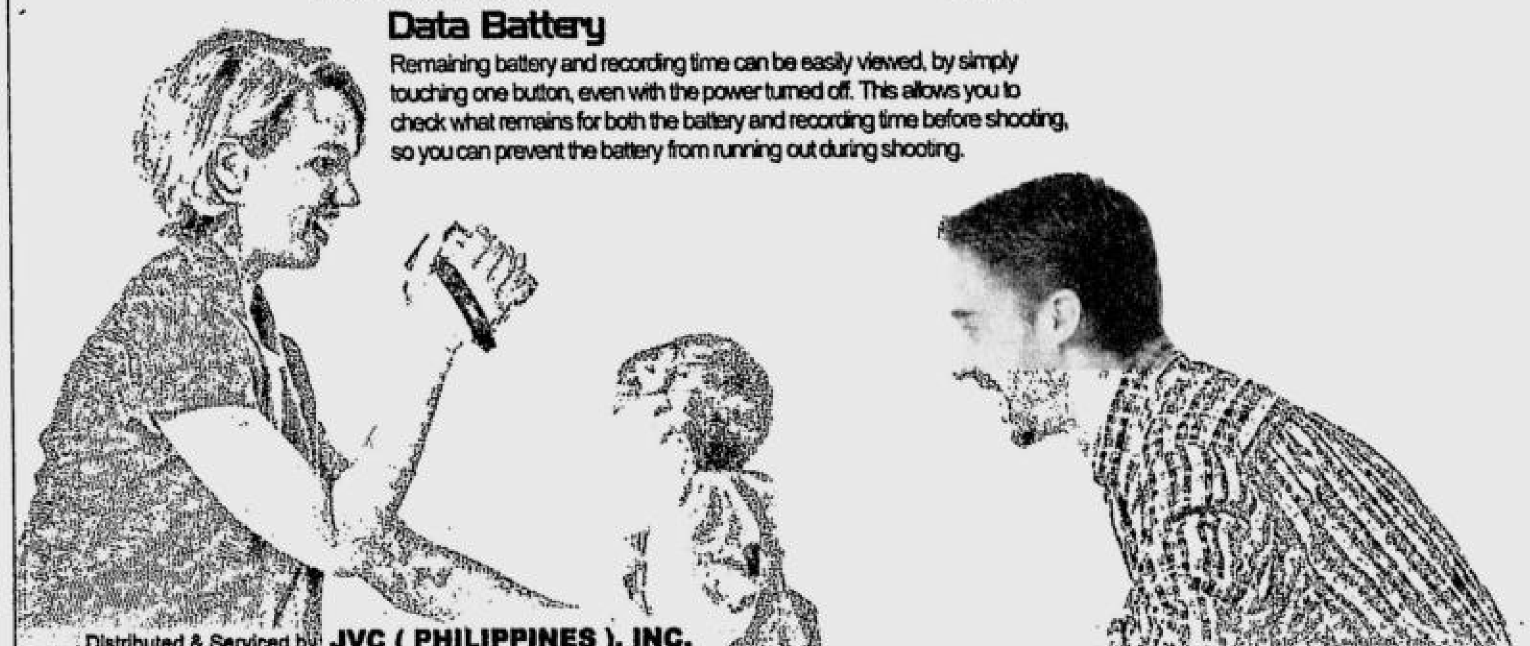

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Drugstores ask SC to void seniors' discount

By Philip C. Tubeza

DRUGSTORE owners yesterday asked the Supreme Court to strike down a portion of the Expanded Senior Citizens Law of 2003 which requires commercial establishments to give senior citizens a 20-percent discount.

They claimed that the law was forcing small drugstores to increase the prices of their products as the government was reimbursing them only 32 percent of the discount they give.

In a 30-page petition, five drugstore owners urged the tribunal to issue a temporary restraining order to stop the social welfare, health, finance, justice, and interior and local government departments from implementing the law.

"[The law] forced drugstores to advance from their own pockets the 20-percent discount of the senior citizens, but did not provide for a mechanism whereby drugstores will be justly compensated or reasonably reimbursed for whatever they advanced," said lawyer Victor Roque, the counsel for the petitioners.

Roque said the law effectively granted a privilege to senior citizens but did so at the expense of drugstore owners and other business establishments.

The law provides that drugstores be reimbursed through "tax deductions." The scheme allows the establishments to apply to the Bureau of Internal Revenue for the refund, which comes out to only 32 percent of the 20-percent discount advanced.

Roque said this meant that drugstore owners lose 68 centavos out of every P1 discount given as they are reimbursed only 32 centavos.

The lawyer noted that the law also removed the annual income ceiling of P60,000 needed to qualify for the discount that was set by the old law, "virtually extending the 20-percent discount to all 4.5 million senior citizens, regardless of income."

He cited the anti-hypertensive maintenance drug Norvasc, which petitioner Carlos Super Drug buys from distributors at P37.57 per tablet. The drugstore then sells it at P39.60, at a margin of five percent.

With the 20-percent discount, the drugstore sells Norvasc at P31.68, which means a loss of P5.89 per tablet. The store would then get a refund of P2.53 per tablet, way below the P7.92 discount that it gave the senior citizen.

Roque said this scheme would eventually force small- to medium-sized drugstores, which form the majority of establishments selling medicines in the country, to close shop.

Already, the law has forced these drugstores to increase the prices of medicines, particularly branded drugs, to recoup their losses. This in turn has led to lower sales, virtually rendering the discount ineffective, he said.

"Because these small drugstores are pushed [against] the wall, so to speak, their pricing strategy has effectively made the prices of medicines prohibitive and unaffordable," Roque said.

He said the law was a step backward for the government drive to promote small and medium enterprises. Instead of giving SMEs a boost, the law virtually imposes a death sentence on medium-sized drugstores, which face the prospect of closure because of heavy losses, Roque said.

The law also effectively denies the discount to 4.5 million of country's five million senior citizens, Roque said.

"Of the five million senior citizens, only 500,000 are in Metro Manila. Regrettably, only these half a million senior citizens who have easy access to Mercury Drug, the biggest drugstore chain in the country, will get to enjoy the 20-percent discount," he said.

Roque said Mercury Drug can afford to give the discount because of the huge price discounts it gets from pharmaceutical companies as a result of the volume of its bulk orders.

IBASURA ANG SDO
AMBALA
LUPA PARA
NAGBUBUN
AMBALA

A MILITANT worker of Hacienda Luisita flexes his slingshot in front of Gate 1 of Central Azucarera de Tarlac. The workers refuse to obey the return to work order issued by the department of labor.

REM ZAMORA

LUISITA STRIKE

DOLE helpless at workers' defiance

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment yesterday said it had no power to force members of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (Catlu)to return to work while they were appealing the DOLE decision settling the union's dispute with the sugar central's management.

Undersecretary Benedicto Ernesto Bitonio Jr., DOLE spokesperson, said the department would not be deputizing the police to force the union members to go back to work, even as he assured Catlu its motion for reconsideration would be "acted upon accordingly as soon as possible."

Bitonio added that any outbreak of violence at the picket lines would be "a peace and order issue" that the police would have to deal with.

"If some members (of Catlu) opt not to return to work, we can't compel them to do otherwise. There is no basis to deputize the police to force them to return," he told reporters.

The official explained that under the Labor Code, deputizing the police may be done only once—when the DOLE assumes jurisdiction and orders the striking union members to return to work.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, in a statement, said, "I urge the striking workers to follow the rule of law. In that way, we can restore peace and harmony at Hacienda Luisita while we resolve the motion for reconsideration."

Despite DOLE's decision last week, the Catlu strike remains, with at least 150 people, mostly sympathizers, manning the sugar plantation's 12 gates daily.

About 250 sympathizers recently held a rally at the Tarlac City Hall in support of Catlu.

DOLE also received reports that workers who participated in the strike and wanted to return to work were being barred from entering Hacienda Luisita by the pickets.

In their nine-page motion for reconsideration dated Jan. 18, Catlu said DOLE committed grave abuse of discretion when it declared the strike illegal, dismissed 35 union officers and granted the laborers wages and other benefits much smaller than they had demanded.

Catlu lawyers Nenita Mahinay and Noel Neri also pointed out that the union had already filed before the Court of Appeals a petition for certiorari questioning the validity of the DOLE's assumption of jurisdiction over the dispute.

On Nov. 6, 2004, 83 of the sugar central's 700 workers staged a strike following a deadlock in their collective bargaining agreement negotiations. They were soon joined by about 5,000 sympathizers—other plantation workers, local residents and members of militant groups.

Ten days later, a combined police-military force deputized by DOLE to enforce a return-to-work order dispersed the strike. Seven persons and scores of others were injured in the clash that ensued.

Palace pressing lobby for VAT, critic claims

By Carlito Pablo

MALACAÑANG has mounted a determined lobby to ensure the passage of a bill increasing the value-added tax from 10 to 12 percent, a measure which critics inside and outside Congress have decried as regressive and anti-poor.

Administration Rep. Gilbert Remulla (NP, Cavite) claimed that a Palace official has been summoning a group of House legislators from the National Capital Region known to be opposed to the measure with the result that a number of them have changed their stand.

The lawmakers belong to the Metro Manila Caucus, a House bloc composed of 22 NCR legislators that met recently and decided not to support the VAT bill on the grounds that their constituents, who are mostly from the low-income groups, would be hit hard by the measure.

Remulla said that when Malacañang got wind of the group's stand, Secretary Gabriel Claudio, the presidential adviser on political affairs who also supervises the presidential legislative liaison office, started calling the members to the Palace.

"As a result, a number of congressmen from Metro Manila changed their stand and will be voting for the VAT increase," Remulla said, but declined to give names.

Spectator

Claudio was spotted watching the proceedings at the House last Wednesday.

Remulla, who is not a member of the caucus, said the opposition to the VAT increase cuts across party lines in the House.

"At least 40 percent of the members of the House are not in favor of the VAT hike," he said.

Even Deputy Speaker for Luzon Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III (LP, Tarlac) is hesitant to throw his support behind the bill.

Aquino said the bill might be hard to sell to the public.

Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio (NPC, South Cotabato) said the bill would face an uphill battle as even administration legislators are opposed to the measure.

"A number of congressmen are drawing the line this time with the VAT. They may have supported other revenue measures but this one is a different case," she said.

Proponents of the VAT bill have indicated, however, that they are willing to give ground to ensure the passage of House Bill No. 3555.

The bill's principal author, Rep. Eric Singson (LP, Ilocos Sur), said he was open to exempting processed food items from the VAT increase.

As the current system already exempts unprocessed foods, like fresh meat and fish, the proposed VAT hike will not affect food prices in general.

"We are aware of the concerns of our people in these hard times and we are addressing these accordingly," said Singson, who is also vice chair of the House committee on ways and means.

Rep. Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac), the committee chair, said that the exemption of processed food items from the VAT hike would speed up passage of the measure.

'Compromise solution'

"It can be a compromise solution later on," Lapus said.

The increase to 12 percent of VAT is expected to generate P35 billion in incremental revenues for the cash-strapped government.

Lapus noted that with projected exemption of processed food items, the government will have to sacrifice foregone potential revenues of P900 million.

Citing figures from the finance department and the National Economic and Development Authority, he said that families earning P60,000 or less per year are "hardly affected" by the proposed VAT increase.

"Low-income families consume largely either VAT exempt goods like rice, fish and other raw agricultural products or goods from underground economy, which are not in the tax net," Lapus said.

As for rent, Lapus noted that under the current VAT system, rentals not exceeding P8,000 per month are already exempted from VAT.

The bill also faces rough sailing in the Senate where a number of senators have indicated their opposition.

Iodine lack is why Junior can't read

HERE'S one reason Junior may not know how to read, or add.

The Department of Health said yesterday some 1.2 million Filipino children had iodine deficiency disorder (IDD)—which is likely to make them intellectually dull—brought about by the lack of iodized salt in their diet.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said many Filipino households continued to use non-iodized salt because it was cheaper than iodized salt by P1 per kilo.

This has resulted in 11.4 percent of children in the 6-12 age group suffering from IDD, according to the 2003 National Nutrition Survey conducted by the Department of Science and Technology.

"That's a lot. Imagine having this many kids with the potential to... develop cretinism. If the kids have IDD, it means there's a possibility na *talagang mabobo sila* (they will become dumb)," Dayrit said at a press conference yesterday.

Blanche S. Rivera

COURT-MARTIAL

Drama marks Garcia trial

By Alcuin Papa

DRAMA highlighted yesterday's court-martial proceedings against former Armed Forces of the Philippines comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia (ret.) after a prosecution witness broke down in tears.

Rosario Santos, chief finance officer of the Armed Forces and Police Savings and Loan Association Inc. (AFPSLAI), wept under intense grilling by defense lawyer Constantino de Jesus.

At one point during De Jesus' cross-examination, the lawyer, with a hint of sarcasm, asked Santos if Garcia was "a valued client of the AFPSLAI."

When Santos replied in the affirmative, De Jesus asked her, "Then why are you testifying against him?"

This brought laughter to the gallery, and tears to Santos' eyes. A smiling De Jesus then tried to placate Santos with a hand gesture.

Quickly, the prosecution led by Lt. Col. Pedro H. Davila moved for a 10-minute recess "to allow the witness to regain her composure and spare her from further embarrassment."

Davila also asked the court-martial officers to warn De Jesus not to "embarrass" Santos.

After the recess, De Jesus took exception to Davila's "accusation" that he was out to embarrass Santos. "But I am not making an accusation, I am making a statement of fact," retorted Davila.

Lt. Col. Al Perreras of the prosecution panel then moved for an adjournment after an emotional Santos could not continue with her testimony.

Maj. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, president of the court-martial, ordered the trial reset to Jan. 27.

Santos tried to avoid reporters on her way out of the court but she managed to tell them that De Jesus' line of questioning was "personal (*personalan*)" and "argumentative."

"*Di dapat ganun* (It should not be that way)," she added.

Capt. Candy Rivas, spokesperson for the court-martial, told reporters Santos "was under a lot of pressure."

Before the crying incident, reporters had noticed that Santos was tense under De Jesus' questioning. "She was tense but she was pausing while answering the questions maybe because she was just looking for the right word," Rivas said.

Also at yesterday's hearing, De Jesus brought up the issue of confidentiality, saying AFPSLAI accounts were covered by Republic Act No. 1405 or the Bank Secrecy Law.

De Jesus argued that the subpoena served on Santos did not require her to testify on deposit accounts at the AFPSLAI and that the prosecution had yet to present the original copy of the certification issued by the AFPSLAI on Garcia's account.

He moved to strike Santos' testimony from the record, saying that under the law she was not allowed to divulge account information.

Global Pinoy confab starts

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro will keynote the ongoing 3rd Global Filipino Networking Convention at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel in Lahug.

The three-day event, which opened yesterday, gathers together 300 modern-day Filipino "heroes" —the overseas Filipino workers— and 200 professionals from all over the world, as well as student leaders.

With the theme "Pinoy Power Worldwide," the event was organized by the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA) with the aim of encouraging Filipinos overseas to play an active part in steering the Philippine economy towards recovery.

The Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau (CVCB), headed by its founding chair Patrick Gregorio, is the event co-convenor.

Gracing the affair are Senate President Franklin Drilon, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Tourism Secretary Ace Durano, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, Senators Manuel Villar and Richard Gordon, Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia, Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña, Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Ouano, Lapulapu City Mayor Arturo Radaza and DOT Region VII Director Dawnie Roa.

Comprehensive power program sought

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy must embark on a comprehensive program to address future world oil price hikes, cut the high power rates for industrial users in Mindanao, and improve the financial position of the National Power Corp., which remains a heavy burden on the national government.

This call was made by Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. yesterday as he sought more follow-through on the DOE's announced measures last year like energy conservation and shifts to alternative fuels and renewable energy sources, among others.

"The continued Middle East tensions and rising global demand for oil against limited supply will mean steadily rising oil prices in the forseeable future. This will continue to be the biggest drain on the country's foreign exchange reserves and a dampener on our economic growth," Pichay warned in a press statement.

These realities, Pichay said, also justify the need for the DOE to jumpstart Philippine oil exploration activity through investment marketing and incentives offered especially in Mindanao where the presence of onshore oil deposits is suspected.

Pichay, vice chair of the Commission on Appointments, also recommended that Napocor sell its 100 MW in excess geothermal and hydro power in Mindanao to industrial users at lower prices, to generate P1.5 billion in added Napocor revenues and boost employment and economic activity for the island.

Correction

IN THE JAN. 19 issue, a Metro story on Page A19—"Ortigas road a 'free' parking area"—misstated the location of a contested stretch of road in Pasig City. The controversial parking area is on Pearl Drive—not Jade Drive.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

Lay forum to kick off medical convention

A LAY forum on life-threatening conditions that accelerate atherosclerosis—which leads to heart attacks, heart and kidney failure—will kick off the 10th Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and the Philippine Lipid Society (PLS) on Jan. 30 from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Palawan Room of the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The lay forum, which is open to the public, is a pre-convention activity and the first in the series to be conducted by the PSH and PLS for this year as both organizations jointly pursue various programs to reduce the mortality rate and control the upsurge of the country's top killer disease.

It will focus on Metabolic Syndrome—the constellation of conditions including hypertension, high cholesterol levels, obesity and diabetes that accelerates the process of atherosclerosis.

Atherosclerosis refers to deposits of yellowish plaques or atheromas containing cholesterol in the inner layer of the arteries. These cause the hardening of the blood vessels, which is the basis of coronary and cerebral artery diseases.

The lay forum will be handled by Doctors Mary Anne Lim-Abrahan, Hilda Uy and Adolfo Bellosillo and Ms. Sanirose Orbeta.

Deadline of registration is Jan. 26.

US court tosses Pinoy claims in ship blast to RP

MIAMI—A federal appeals court has upheld a decision forcing the families of more than two dozen Filipino sailors killed and injured in a cruise ship boiler explosion to pursue their financial claims in the Philippines.

The 11th US Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta agreed Tuesday with a Miami judge that contracts the sailors signed require that any injury claims be submitted to arbitration in the Philippines.

Calls for comment Wednesday to attorneys handling the case were not immediately returned.

Eight sailors died and 18 were injured after a boiler exploded while the 1,035-foot Norway was docked in Miami in May 2003. The investigation into the cause of the blast is still under way.

Ten Filipino crew members and their survivors sued to pursue their claims in US courts. The decision to send their claims overseas means the difference between potentially millions of dollars in awards from American courts and $50,000 for each dead sailor in the Philippines.

Launched as the France in 1960, the 2,000-passenger Norwegian Cruise Lines ship was towed to Germany after the blast and has retired from the company's fleet.

Filipino sailors sign a one-page contract to work for cruise lines and initial other pages explaining their legal rights. Attorneys representing the sailors and families argued that the page printed in English, normally not the sailors' native language, doesn't mention arbitration and is never explained to them.

Norwegian contended the content of the agreements are universally known among those who sign them. *AP*

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MISSION TO JAPAN

2 solons to appeal Japayukis' case

By Carlito Pablo

TWO RANKING members of the House of Representatives left yesterday for Japan to intercede with Japanese authorities on behalf of thousands of Filipino overseas performing artists affected by Tokyo's stricter visa regulations for foreign entertainers.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. has dispatched Representatives Edcel Lagman (Aksyon, Albay) and Roseller Barinaga (NPC, Zamboanga del Norte), chairpersons of the special committee on overseas workers affairs, and labor and employment, respectively, to try to convince the Japanese government to relax the implementation of new visa regulations.

During the four-day mission, Lagman said they hoped to seek a transition period as the regulations were to take effect in late January.

According to Lagman, Japanese legislators and officials of the Japanese Ministry of Justice are finalizing the ministerial ordinance on the new visa requirements, which seeks to curb human trafficking.

Transition period

"The transition period is imperative to allow Filipino artists and entertainers sufficient time to qualify for visa either by undergoing a formal training of two years or gaining experience of the same period both outside of Japan," he said.

Dozens of Filipina entertainers working in Japan and are awaiting new visas in Manila trooped to the House and sought congressional assistance.

Starting late January, Japan will no longer recognize the Artist Accreditation Certificate issued by the Philippine government as basis for the issuance of entertainer visas.

In lieu of the AAC, Japanese immigration authorities will require entertainers to show proof of two years' formal training at an educational institute relevant to a performance trade or two years' experience outside Japan.

Once the regulations are implemented, Japan will reduce visa releases to 8,000 from 80,000 visas annually.

Japan put in place stricter visa regulations after it was cited by the United States government as one of the countries where human trafficking is rampant.

Exploited by syndicates

Lagman said while Manila was supportive of Tokyo's initiative to contain human trafficking, "these efforts should be pursued not at the expense of victims like Filipina entertainers who are exploited by criminal syndicates in Japan."

"Japanese policies against human trafficking should be geared toward addressing the said illegal activities and unfair treatment of overseas performing artists," Lagman said.

Karangalan nat'l confab starts today

KARANGALAN, the first national conference and festival aimed at "mobilizing excellence to create a visionary Philippines," will be held on Jan. 21-23 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Karangalan (honor, dignity) will feature workshops covering integral sustainable development; approaches to ecology, economics, politics, culture, society, human development, and spirituality and social development.

Among those who have confirmed their participation are Education Secretary Florencio Abad, business leader Gerry Ablaza, Emily Abrera, Walden Bello, Sheila Coronel, Tony Tan Caktiong, Chin Chin Gutierrez, Von Hernandez, Nes Jardin, Sr. Mary John Mananzan, Nicanor Perlas and Jess Robredo.

Artists who will perform include the Madrigal Singers, Grace Nono, Kuh Ledesma and John Arcilla. Ces Drilon of ABS-CBN will emcee the event.

According to Perlas of the Karangalan organizing committee, a nation without a vision, lacking a sense of purpose and achievement, will rapidly sink into oblivion; while a nation with vision and commitment will change its present and future and make a positive contribution to the general advancement of the world.

Karangalan, he said, will support and strengthen the rise of a visionary Philippines in the years to come.

The project was organized by Tindog Pilipinas!, Philippine Advancement and Renewal through Threefolding Networking, Education, Research and Service (Partners), the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Living Asia TV, AIM Alumni Association Foundation, Anthroposophical Society in the Philippines, Bohol Goodwill Volunteers, Center for Alternative Development Initiatives, Organizational Change Consultants International, Professionals for Social Responsibility, Ramon Aboitiz Foundation Inc., Ikapati Farm, Lingkod Tao Kalikasan, Lifebank Foundation, PETA, Don Bosco Diocesan Youth Center and Truthforce!

Interested parties may visit the Karangalan web site at www.truthforce.info or call the Karangalan secretariat at 687-1309 or 687-1312 or e-mail karangalan@gmail.com.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 21, 2005
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 8:6-13
Gospel: Mark 3:13-19

Jesus went up into the hill country and called those he wanted and they came to him. So he appointed twelve to be with him; and he called them apostles. He wanted to send them out to preach, and he gave them authority to drive out demons.

These are the Twelve: Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter; James, son of Zebedee, and John his brother, to whom he gave the name Boanerges, which means "men of thunder"; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alpheus, Thaddeus, Simon the Cananean and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

Commentary

As it becomes clearer what Jesus is preaching and what he is doing, he calls more people to him. He appoints twelve as apostles to preach and gives them authority to drive out demons—to name what hinders us from being the beloved children of God. He names them all, by which family they come from, nicknames, towns they hail from and lastly as one who betrayed him. Are we Jesus' apostles and disciples now? Can we name eleven or twelve of us who together follow him and seek to preach and name the truth about evil in our lives and world? How would we be described—by our family connections, the towns we were born in or live in, a nickname that reflects our personalities or behavior—or sadly would we be known as the one who betrayed Jesus. Jesus wants us all as his own and calls us to him and we go with others, not alone or separately. Are we known by the company we keep and known as his friends and companions?

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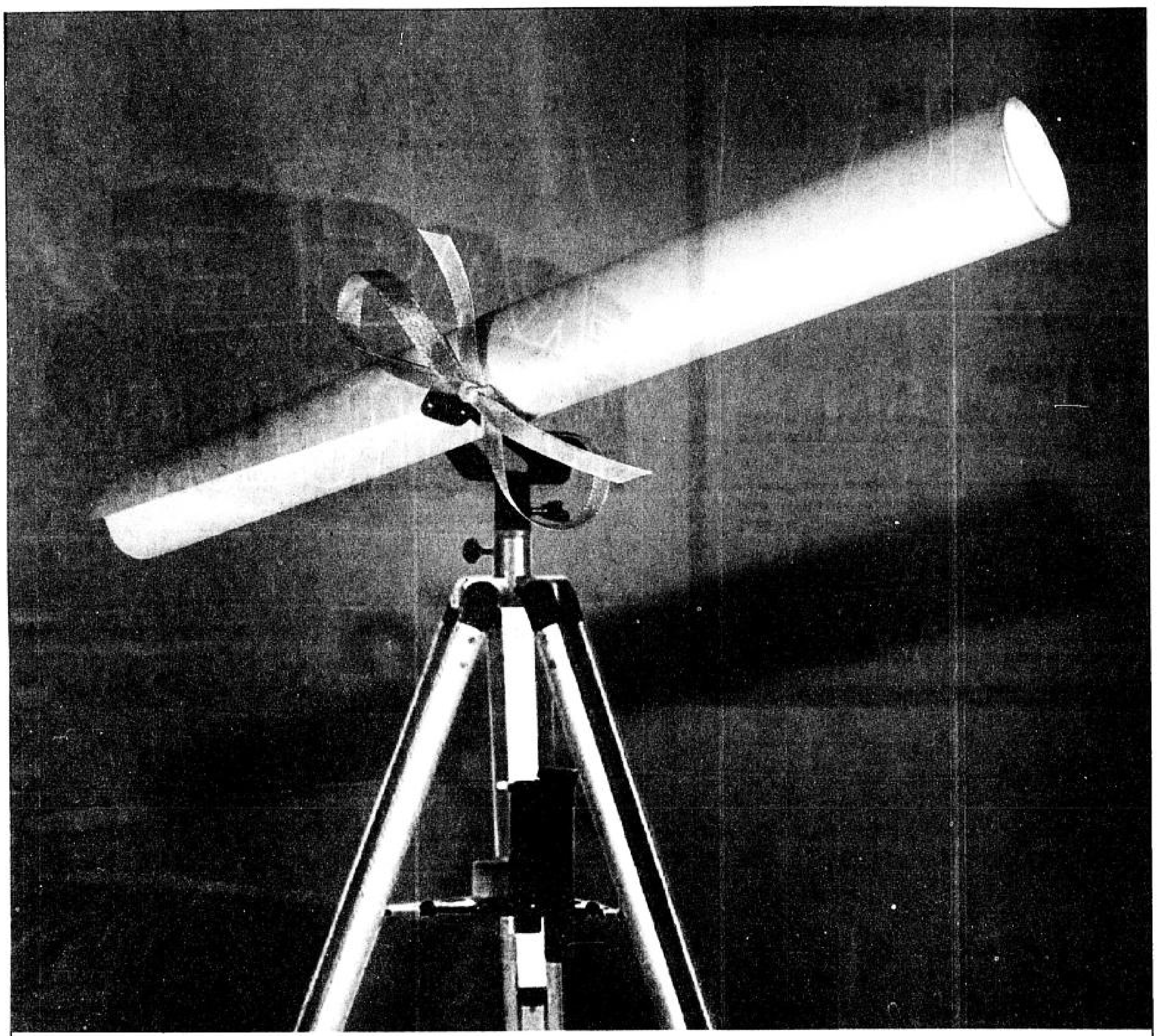
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

COMMERCIAL LAW/MERCANTILE LAW (CORPORATION LAW)—A corporation may be held in estoppel from denying as against third persons the authority of its officers or agents who have been clothed by it with ostensible or apparent authority. Although an officer or agent acts without, or in excess of, his actual authority if he acts within the scope of an apparent authority with which the corporation has clothed him by holding him out or permitting him to appear as having such authority, the corporation is bound thereby in favor of a person who deals with him in good faith in reliance on such apparent authority, as where an officer is allowed to exercise a particular authority with respect to the business, or a particular branch of it, continuously and publicly, for a considerable time. [Reference: Yao Ka Sin Trading vs CA, G.R. No. 53820, 15 June 1992, 209 SCRA 763, 783] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Hydro Resources Contractors Corp. vs National Irrigation Administration, G. R. No. 160215, November 10, 2004]

BY R. B. VERA



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Guingona back in GMA camp, gets China post

From page A1

ment.

The appointment came less than a year after Guingona served as an adviser to Fernando Poe Jr., Ms Arroyo's chief rival in the May 2004 elections.

With the political opposition flexing its muscle and rumors of destabilization flying fast, Malacañang officials were only too eager to welcome Guingona back.

"Regardless of previous political differences, the stature of former Vice President Guingona as a statesman, nationalist and key figure in our national democratic transition cannot be diminished or denied," Presidential political adviser Gabriel Claudio said.

He was referring to Guingona's role in the Edsa II uprising which toppled President Joseph Estrada and installed Ms Arroyo, then Vice President, as the new Chief Executive.

It was Guingona who delivered the "I accuse" speech exposing the allegation of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson that Estrada had received "jueteng" payola.

Ms Arroyo rewarded Guingona by appointing him Vice President and later foreign secretary. But in July 2002, Guingona quit the Cabinet, citing "honest differences of opinion" with Ms Arroyo.

When Ms Arroyo announced she was not running in 2004 and then changed her mind, Guingona was among those who strongly criticized her. He quit the ruling party, Lakas-CMD, and became Poe's "adviser on governance and public administration."

"His appointment also shows the President's willingness to bury political differences in the past in order to serve the cause of unity, reconciliation and the interest of the Filipino nation," Claudio told the INQUIRER.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said Malacañang had already submitted to the Commission on Appointments (CA) the papers nominating Guingona as the next ambassador to China.

Romulo, who was at the Senate to attend the meeting of the congressional oversight committee on the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States, told reporters that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had submitted the nomination papers.

'Very timely'

Romulo said Ermita had talked to Guingona and his information was that the latter was "willing to accept (the position) if confirmed."

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said she was supporting Guingona's appointment given the latter's expertise in politics as well as his capacity to "strategize, to neutralize any possible adversaries."

Santiago said Guingona's appointment was "very timely" as she noted that the former vice president was very nationalistic.

"So that he will try to do his best to promote trade between the two countries," she said.

"And since I am chair of the foreign relations committee of the Senate, I'm going to do my best that he will not need to undergo a protracted hearing, that he will just by acclamation be endorsed and then eventually be approved by the CA in plenary session," Santiago added.

Only choice

Asked if Guingona was the personal choice of President Arroyo, Romulo said the former vice president was Ms Arroyo's principal and only choice for the position.

Asked whether Guingona's nomination was part of Malacañang's way of reconciling with the former vice president, Romulo said he thought the main reason for Guingona's nomination was because he was "well-qualified" for the job.

He pointed out that Guingona had extensive experience and qualifications to be the next ambassador to China, the latter once having served as foreign secretary.

"I think it's important to harness his talent, his skills and his experience for this very important position," Romulo said.

Too old for job

But former Sen. Francisco Tatad said Guingona was too old for the job.

Tatad said Guingona was 76, way beyond the 65-year-old mandatory retirement age.

Unlike to a Cabinet post, a 65-year-old Filipino could not be appointed ambassador, Tatad said.

Section 23 of Republic Act No. 7175, otherwise known as the Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991, provides that "all officers and employees of the department who have reached the age of 65 shall be . . . automatically retired from the service."

"Provided, however, that all incumbent non-career chiefs of mission who are 70 years old and above shall continue to hold office until June 30, 1992, unless sooner removed by the appointing authority. Non-career appointees who shall serve beyond the age of 65 shall not be entitled to retirement benefits," he said.

Illegal

This would make Guingona's appointment illegal, Tatad said.

Tatad urged Ms Arroyo to withdraw Guingona's nomination "if she does not want to risk possible impeachment."

He called on Senate President Franklin Drilon, concurrent chair of the CA, to ensure that "Guingona's nomination is automatically rejected if it has already reached the commission."

Presidential Communications Director Silvestre Afable III said there was nothing wrong with Ms Arroyo offering a post to Guingona even if he had been critical of her and joined her political rival.

"The former Vice President dealt with the administration in a very transparent manner. He had always spoken his mind even when he was still in the Cabinet. So I think he also deserves statesman-like treatment," Afable said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

He said he did not expect Guingona to have any "policy difference" with Ms Arroyo now that he would be her ambassador to China.

Strategic diplomacy

"The policy difference was at a given point in time. In the case of China, I'm sure there has been a meeting of minds," Afable said.

Afable said Guingona's appointment as ambassador was a "matter of strategic diplomacy."

"With his stature, he will make an excellent envoy to China, no less," Claudio said.

Ms Arroyo had said it was in the country's best interest to make friends with China, it being the world's fastest-growing economy. Her first foreign trip after winning her own six-year term last May was to China.

In outlining her foreign policy, Ms Arroyo said the Philippines recognized the "determining influence" of China, Japan and the United States in the region.

VISITING American general, Lt. Gen. Wallace Gregson (center), commander of US Marine Forces in the Pacific, and Philippine Marines commander, Maj. Gen. Orlando Buenaventura, meet at Fort Bonifacio to discuss continued programs for sustained counterterrorism capability. AP

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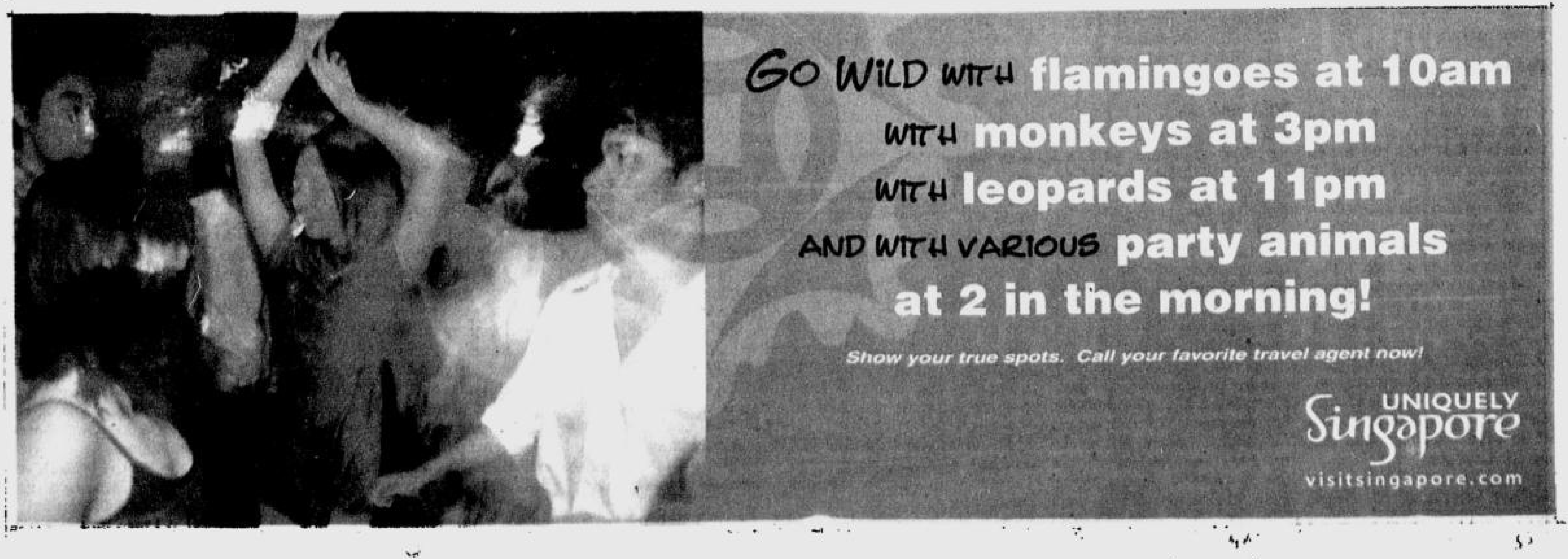

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Gov't execs vow radical reforms to stop corruption

By Doris C. Dumlao and Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT'S economic managers have vowed to pursue more radical reforms to curb systemic and widespread corruption in the Philippines.

"I take it as a given that there's so much revenue leakage. I simply assume that this is indeed happening and come up with an antidote," said Guillermo Parayno, commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue. The BIR collects 80 percent of government revenues.

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong said the Department of Finance was moving to expand the coverage of the Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS), the DOF's own anti-corruption unit.

"We are really doing something about it (corruption), that is why we want to extend the power of RIPS," Amatong told reporters.

For his part, Parayno said he had seen various estimates of revenue leakages from a low of P200 billion to a high of P600 billion a year, but noted that the BIR had taken great strides to boost its tax administration. He said the agency's collection growth of 10.3 percent was the highest over the last six years.

Parayno said the BIR would need more drastic reforms and to come up with an integrated plan covering all aspects of tax administration. He said the lateral attrition bill would not be enough for the BIR, which is also supporting a new bill that would facilitate its reorganization and allow it to assume a corporate identity.

The lateral attrition bill, which is one of the eight new tax reform measures sought by the Arroyo administration, provides for the following:

- Transfer in post or assignment or severance from government service of officials and employees of revenue collection agencies who fail to meet collection targets;
- Performance standards and review mechanism;
- Incentives to performing collection agencies equivalent to 10 percent of the excess of collections over target, to include the BIR, Bureau of Customs, Land Transportation Office and other revenue-collecting agencies with at least P100 million in annual income, except the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Bureau of the Treasury.

Amatong said she had instructed Finance Undersecretary Emanuel Bonoan, head of the DOF's RIPS, which conducts lifestyle checks on BIR and Bureau of Customs employees, to include in its supervision all other government agencies under the umbrella of the finance department.

She added that RIPS would also begin receiving complaints against corrupt municipal and city treasurers, whose work are supervised by the Bureau of Local Government Finance, an attached office of the DOF.

RIPS, which has filed several cases of graft and corruption, used to only cover employees and officials from the BIR and BOC.

Amatong said, however, that RIPS would need additional funds to fulfill its goal of widening its coverage.

She said that for this year, only P1 million was allotted for RIPS, an amount which she said was too small to cover all the required expenses, such as for hiring the services of lawyers and for investigation.

The P1-million budget for RIPS did not come from the national government's budget but was shouldered by the Office of the President's special fund.

Aside from cracking down on corrupt government employees, Amatong said the problem on tax leakages was also a result of dishonesty among taxpayers. She admitted that there was a need to strengthen the enforcement of the country's tax laws.

"The Bureau of Internal Revenue has to strengthen its enforcement system," she said, adding that administrative measures to curb cases of tax cheating should be in place.

Parayno said the BIR was now harnessing information technology to improve tax administration. "I know we can't lick the problem overnight," he said, noting that tax administration would significantly improve once a bill creating a new national revenue authority had been enacted into law. He noted that Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, a former banker, had recently filed such a bill in Congress.

Earlier attempts to pass a National Revenue Authority bill failed as BIR employees themselves opposed the Peruvian model used. Under the model, everyone in the organization would be terminated and this would be followed by a selective rehiring.

Parayno said this model would work in a dictatorship but not in the Philippines.

Not our study, not our corruption list, ADB clarifies

From page A1

Business to further support some of the cross-country comparisons," Maligalig said.

Two decades of corruption

President Macapagal-Arroyo denied accountability for the country's ranking as the second most-corrupt country in a study cited by the ADB.

"The ADB study that appeared in (yesterday's) newspaper talks about how the country has been left behind in terms of economic development due to two decades of corruption," said Ms Arroyo in an interview with dzEC radio.

The President said that the ADB report did not focus solely on her four years in Malacañang.

"In fact, they have been discussing sluggish growth over the the last 20 years. But if you compare economic growth under my administration, it is higher than our neighboring countries. The six-percent growth rate in 2004 was really not expected to reach that high," the President said.

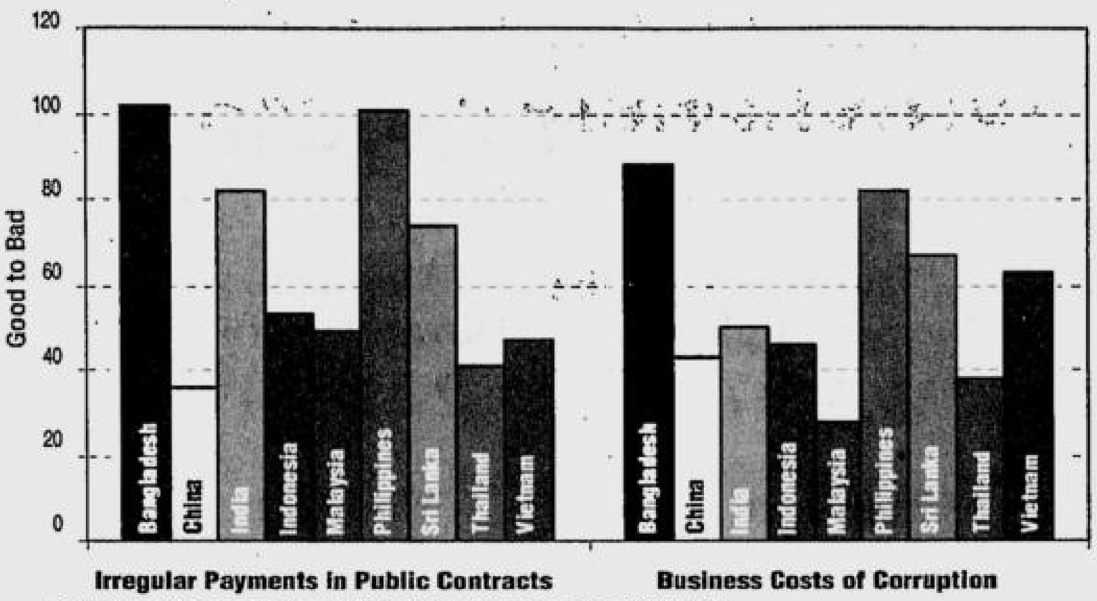
She said the most important message from the people power revolt four years ago was "the importance of fighting corruption that has long pervaded the culture of our nation."

She also reiterated her government's strategy to curb corruption—law enforcement, deterrence and education—that she said were meant to "ensure that every single centavo the government collects goes directly to the national treasury and is spent wisely for our pro-poor agenda."

The President cited Congress' approval of the lateral attrition bill as proof of her administration's determination to combat corruption.

Irregular payments in public contracts and business costs of corruption (2003)

Ranking out of 102 Countries



Source: World Economic Forum, Global Competitiveness Report 2003/04

Anti-corruption rhetoric

In the Senate, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the country was suffering from a "culture of anti-corruption rhetoric."

"[N]obody wants to jeopardize his physical safety or even his financial security fighting corruption," Santiago said.

She said Filipinos "live in a culture of corruption."

The senator said it was known that Filipinos could not obtain right away their driver's license, baptismal papers or other ordinary documents "unless we put money on the table."

'Outmoded, unfair'

"We live in a culture of corruption and that is why there is so much frustration at the general level of the public because they do not see any evidence in their daily lives that there is a reduction of the degree of corruption in the society," she told reporters.

In the House of Representatives, several congressmen questioned the motive of the ADB in releasing what they considered an "outmoded" and "unfair" report which ranked the Philippines second among the most corrupt countries in the world.

Davao Oriental Rep. Joel Mayo Almario questioned the timing of the ADB survey's release.

Lifestyle checks

Because the survey was outmoded, he said, it failed to consider the programs and measures undertaken by the government to combat corruption.

These measures included the creation of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission, the conduct of lifestyle checks on public officials and the promotion of transparency and accountability in government transactions, especially in procurement.

"The study does not address the other side of the coin, namely, that those bribing government officials are just as guilty," Almario said.

"If we are to eliminate a culture of corruption, businessmen should do their part by engaging in honest practices and identifying errant bureaucrats who can then be prosecuted," he said.

Manila Rep. Ernesto "Banzai" Nieva, on the other hand, said members of the business community should help in identifying public officials involved in bribery in public contracts.

Nieva said it was unfair of the ADB to deal only on corruption by totally ignoring the gains made by the government to ease it.

"We hope international institutions like ADB will be fair in assessing the country's performance toward reforms to address our problems," Nieva said.

He said the outcome of the study might adversely affect the position of the country in the ongoing assessment by credit rating agencies and investors of its reform measures.

Self-serving

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran said the ADB's motive was "tainted" and definitely "self-serving."

"It is not as if the ADB made the study to help the Philippine government to clean up its act. On the contrary, the ADB's motives were more to goad the Macapagal-Arroyo government into hastening the passage of the tax bills and impose more laws that will give greater leeway to foreign investors," he said.

Beltran said he believed that the ADB was, in fact, involved in the current rush of the Arroyo administration to ratify certain tax measures.

"Corruption in the government is being blamed for the fiscal crisis and slow economic growth but in truth, corruption is also because of the globalization policies the ADB and the IMF are imposing on the country," Beltran said.

Basic ill

Analyst Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings, said: "[Corruption is] a basic ill of any society and it seems like in the case of the Philippines, it's already a cancer which is hard to cure. But efforts to eradicate it are not only the responsibility of the government but the private sector as well.

"The private sector must initiate public awareness campaigns so that this will be taken seriously because it is bad for the economy and this cancer can kill us at the end of the day," he said. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr., Christine O. Avendano Cynthia D. Balana and Doris C. Dumlao*

GMA calls for 'new kind of people power'

From page A1

ported her during the May 2004 presidential election.

In the interview with dzEC, Ms Arroyo discouraged the media from promoting the use of extra-constitutional means like the Edsa people power revolt to effect change in Malacañang.

She said she respected the freedom of the press "even if we do not like what they are saying as long as these are not destabilizing."

While the media may be critical of her administration, what's important is that they air her side, the President said.

"But it's different when they are asking for the removal (of a person in power). It does not matter if they want the change made through an election. But to go through means outside the Constitution, that is really bad," she said in Filipino.

Charm offensive

Despite winning the May elections, Ms Arroyo continues to suffer from poor approval ratings.

The President is in the midst of a "charm offensive" to convince owners and officers of the country's leading television, radio and newspaper companies to support her government by printing more positive stories on the Philippines.

In the Senate, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said there was no need for Filipinos to celebrate Edsa I or II. Edsa I refers to the ouster of former President Ferdinand Marcos in February 1986.

Santiago said this was because she had always been for the removal of a leader by the process provided by law. "No matter how graft-ridden or immoral or evil a public holder is," she said.

Santiago was among the 11 senators who voted on Jan. 16, 2001, against opening the second envelope believed to contain evidence against Estrada during his impeachment trial.

The decision not to open the envelope sparked Edsa II that led to the ouster of Estrada.

Appeal for support

At the Welfareville Compound in Mandaluyong, Ms Arroyo appealed for continued support even as she said destabilization attempts were under control by authorities.

"I am happy that we are together again as we celebrate Edsa Dos and I hope that we will continue to help each other in the spirit of Edsa Dos," Ms Arroyo told some 200 Welfareville residents at a "pulong-bayan" (town hall meeting).

She reiterated her 2005 theme of "urgent change and fervent hope" for the Filipinos.

But she called for unity, saying she could not bring about change without support from the people. "So we need a new kind of people power and that is for us to have unity to make things right for a better life for all of us," Ms Arroyo said.

Security of tenure

She promised security of tenure for some 18,000 families living in Welfareville.

"Every day this January, I will make this tour so that we can give De Soto rights to our people," Ms Arroyo said.

Under the De Soto principle, squatters or even tenants in an apartment building can exercise some kind of ownership over the land or property they live in, which they can use as collateral to start small businesses to improve their lives, according to the President.

She announced that the Department of Social Welfare and Development was going to lease 38 hectares of the prime 72-hectare Welfareville property to the city government. She said Mandaluyong Mayor Neptali Gonzales Jr. would develop it into a socialized housing project.

The government cannot award the land to the socialized housing program without a public bidding.

Long-term lease

Ms Arroyo said the rest of the prime property would be leased to private developers.

"The city government will develop this through the long-term lease (of 50 years renewable) and you can use the titles you will get as collateral so you can set up your own businesses or improve your houses. But you will have the papers, documents that you will stay here for long," Ms Arroyo said. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

Miriam rues colonial mentality, seeks VFA review

From page A1

to international law."

Preemptive self-defense

"How dare an American president think that he can destroy an institution or a process of international law that has taken human civilization centuries to build?" she said.

Santiago also said Bush's theory of preemptive self-defense would not even be accepted in the Philippine Penal Code.

"If you face a person, you cannot shoot him on the grounds that you fear for your life simply because of his appearance," she said, adding:

"There has to be action to indicate that he is a danger to your personal safety and security, [like if he were] holding a gun and pointing it at you."

Bush had ordered the invasion of Iraq because of its alleged stockpile of weapons of mass destruction.

The US government recently called off the fruitless search for such weapons.

VFA review

Santiago wants a review of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement because she thinks it has benefited Americans more than Filipinos in the past five years.

The senator yesterday led a meeting of the congressional oversight committee on the VFA, which was attended by officials like Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo.

Emerging from the closed-door meeting held at the Senate, Santiago said she had asked Abu and Romulo to each present within the week a memorandum on three key issues she wanted clarified in the 1999 agreement that allows the holding of joint military exercises between Philippine and US troops.

She said she wanted the two officials to say whether the Philippines should terminate the VFA, considering that it was based on the old Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) of 1951 and, thus, was "not applicable in the present political configuration of 2005."

If they do not see the need to terminate the agreement, she said, they should recommend amendments and justify these amendments.

Neglected areas

Santiago said she had also asked the two officials to review the MDT, which provides for RP-US military exercises only to prepare for an external armed attack.

She pointed out that the VFA exercises went beyond that because they involved preparations not only for an external armed attack but also for counterterrorism and narcoterrorism.

Santiago noted that while the Supreme Court in 2002 allowed the expansion of the RP-US military exercises beyond mere defense against external armed attack, the tribunal was not clear on what activities should be covered by the VFA.

"In this initial meeting, we have found certain areas that have either been neglected or ignored, and we are going to call the same officers ... so that we can prepare a more solid basis for the joint military exercises that we hold every year at the cost of P96 million," she told reporters.

Asked whether the review of the VFA would mean the cancellation of the joint exercises set to begin next month, Santiago replied in the negative.

But she said that if the next meetings of the oversight committee would show that the Philippines was "paying a much higher cost than the benefit that we might be getting," Congress could pass a resolution seeking the termination of the VFA.

"We have to know what we are getting out of this. What our AFP and police force need at this time are training and education," she said.

US defense strategy

Asked then whether the five-year implementation of the VFA had been a waste of time, Santiago conceded that the Philippines did receive some training and information from the United States.

"But we may have been just carrying out the American defense strategy," she pointed out.

Asked whether Americans had benefited more from the military exercises, she said yes, noting that "they are carrying out their global agenda and we just happen to be a very marginal part of it."

Santiago also disclosed that the US government owed the Philippines some P125 million in refunds.

Every year since the VFA was implemented in 2000, the US government had allotted a P96-million budget for the exercises and advanced their costs, she said.

But US authorities only "pick and choose what they will refund," she added.

Old assumptions

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. expressed support for Santiago's statements, saying the Philippine government should change many of its foreign policies and agreements because these were based on old assumptions.

"After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the US, much has changed," Villar told reporters.

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Most candidates in Iraq poll keeping names secret

BASRA, Iraq—As Iraq's election campaign enters its final stages, most candidates are more worried about staying alive than canvassing for votes.

Even the few like Shiite politician Mansour al-Tamimi who have openly joined the electoral race are avoiding debates and rallies at all cost.

Fears of assassination loom so large that most of the 7,500 candidates taking part in the Jan. 30 poll are keeping their names secret, denying voters information normally considered fundamental to the democratic process.

In the countdown to Iraq's first national ballot since a US-led invasion toppled Saddam Hussein, one Western diplomat called it the first "stealth" election campaign in history.

The reason is clear.

"The death threats are constant," Tamimi said as his bodyguards kept watch at the fortified US consulate in the southern port of Basra. "I choose to take the risk (but) I can't blame others who want to remain anonymous for now."

Insurgents assassinated a candidate from Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's party in the city earlier this week, just the latest in a string of killings of politicians and election workers throughout the country.

It was another sign that Sunni guerrillas bent on scaring people away from the polls are stepping up attacks on the Shiite south, which has been spared the worst of the violence sweeping Baghdad and the Sunni Arab heartlands.

AN IRAQI woman prays at the grave of a relative who died recently in Iraq violence at Ghazali cemetery in Baghdad, Jan 20. Muslims traditionally remember their loved ones on the first day of the Eid holiday. AP

With campaigning curtailed in most places except for the relatively safe Kurdish areas, experts predict religious, ethnic and tribal loyalties will guide most voters.

Majority Shiites, oppressed under Saddam, a Sunni, will vote for Shiites, ensuring them victory. Kurds, looking to cement their self-rule, will vote for Kurds. Sunnis, if they defy calls for an election boycott, will vote for Sunnis.

There are fears, however, that a sectarian election outcome could increase the risk of civil war.

With only 10 days to go, the ballot is shaping up as an exercise in confusion for Iraqis more accustomed to Saddam's rigged one-man races.

This time, voters must choose from more than 100 candidate lists, each put forward by a party or coalition, to choose a 275-member transitional national assembly that will appoint a government and approve a constitution. *Reuters*

Rice keeps to Bush script in tangle with senators

WASHINGTON—In two days of confirmation hearings ending on Wednesday, Secretary of State-designate Condoleezza Rice revealed little of her personal opinions on foreign policy challenges, to the irritation of some senators.

After four years in a behind-the-scenes role as President George W. Bush's national security adviser, Rice passed up an opportunity to publicly stamp her mark on policies, carefully sticking to the script of familiar administration positions.

Compared to her popular predecessor, Colin Powell, Rice also failed to strike a rapport with some senators, who were judging her for a post where they said style and personal touch can be critical.

The lawmakers praised the 50-year-old former Stanford University provost for tenacity, stamina and thorough preparation and were impressed by her command of issues and facts about countries worldwide.

And her tough style was welcome to Republicans. "She never really got off stride. She kept her poise," Sen. George Allen, a Virginia Republican, said.

Democrats, however, complained that she dismissed what she called their "hypotheticals" when they asked about possible ways of dealing with suspected nuclear arms programs in North Korea and Iran.

Rice, an accomplished pianist and avid football fan who is also a fluent Russian speaker, has been extremely close to Bush. He has treated her like family, inviting her to weekends at the Camp David presidential retreat with his wife Laura.

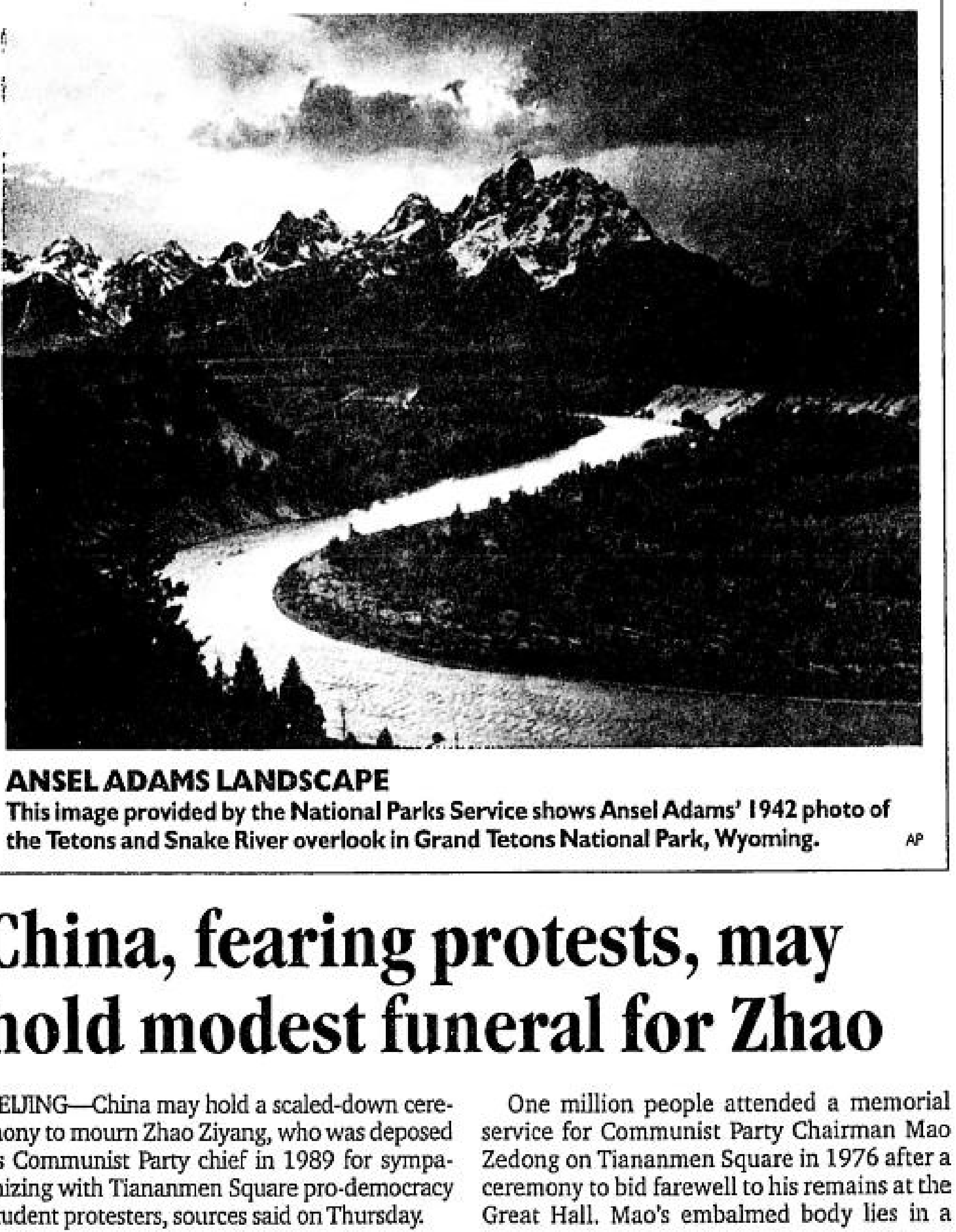
Some senators lamented that she did not show more of her human side at the hearing.

Sen. Christopher Dodd, a Democrat from Connecticut, said it was worrying that she did not find a more personal response to his questioning about the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers, to which she gave technical, legal answers.

"The face of US foreign policy is in the person of the secretary of state, and it's important in moments like this to be able to express yourself, aside from the legalities of things, (about) how you as a human being react to these kinds of activities," Dodd said.

Phyllis Bennis of the liberal Institute for Policy Studies, a Bush administration critic, said Rice gave the impression her concept of diplomacy did not include much compromise. "When you are not looking to persuade people, you do not need empathy, charisma or charm," Bennis said.

The hearings were sometimes contentious, in contrast to most sessions with Powell, where Democrats would gush admiration for a man they regarded as the most credible of Bush's Cabinet officials. *Reuters*



ANSEL ADAMS LANDSCAPE

This image provided by the National Parks Service shows Ansel Adams' 1942 photo of the Tetons and Snake River overlook in Grand Tetons National Park, Wyoming. AP

4 Chinese linked to Boston dirty bomb threat

BOSTON—Federal authorities are seeking to question four Chinese nationals amid unconfirmed reports of a possible "dirty bomb" threat in Boston, authorities said on Wednesday.

Following confusing reports over the degree of threat to the city of Boston, federal authorities on Wednesday night made public photographs of four Chinese nationals identified as Zengrong Lin, Wen Quin Zheng, Xiujin Chen and Guozhi Lin.

Prosecutors said all their law enforcement partners in Massachusetts had received the photographs in connection with an unspecified threat.

"Information was received by federal law enforcement in Boston today originating from an unknown and uncorroborated source regarding an unspecified potential threat," federal prosecutors and the FBI said in a statement issued in Boston.

"There is no further specific information regarding the City of Boston nor is there any degree of specificity on the type of potential threat," the statement said. "As is done whenever we receive this type of information, all appropriate investigative steps are taken."

The statement, issued jointly by US Attorney Michael Sullivan and Boston FBI Special Agent In Charge Kenneth Kaiser, said none of the individuals' names had previously appeared on any kind of "watch list."

The release of the photographs came after ABC News reported on Wednesday that teams equipped with radiological sensors were patrolling Boston amid a possible "dirty bomb" threat.

Boston FBI spokesperson Gail Marcinkiewicz said she was not aware of such patrols, and that the information used in the report was not corroborated. She added that the FBI routinely receives such reports and investigates them. *Reuters*

China, fearing protests, may hold modest funeral for Zhao

BEIJING—China may hold a scaled-down ceremony to mourn Zhao Ziyang, who was deposed as Communist Party chief in 1989 for sympathizing with Tiananmen Square pro-democracy student protesters, sources said on Thursday.

The size and timing of the event were unclear, as was how widely it would be covered by Xinhua news agency and state newspapers, which have played down his death for fear of sparking a popular outpouring of sentiment or even protests.

"Comrade Zhao Ziyang is an old member of our party. His funeral arrangements will be handled accordingly," said an official in the cabinet spokesperson's office.

State television and radio have ignored the death of the former reformist premier and party chief, who promoted the reforms that ensured China's transformation into a fledgling economic powerhouse but who was toppled in a power struggle.

Zhao, who died on Monday aged 85, was ousted for opposing a decision to use troops and tanks to clear Tiananmen Square of protesters on June 3-4, 1989. He spent the final 15 years of his life under house arrest in his Beijing courtyard home.

A source close to the family said Zhao would be laid to rest at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery in western Beijing that is exclusively reserved for senior party officials.

A low-key ceremony to pay respects to his remains, which is one notch below a memorial service in Communist protocol, will be held, the source said.

"He will be buried at Babaoshan. The time has not been decided," the source who spoke on condition of anonymity told Reuters. "It'll be a ceremony to bid farewell to his remains."

The party abolished elaborate memorial services for leaders in the 1980s, but one was still held for paramount leader Deng Xiaoping in 1997 at the Great Hall of the People with 10,000 people attending. Deng's ashes were scattered at sea.

One million people attended a memorial service for Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong on Tiananmen Square in 1976 after a ceremony to bid farewell to his remains at the Great Hall. Mao's embalmed body lies in a mausoleum on the square.

A Babaoshan cemetery official said it had not been decided whether Zhao would be buried or cremated.

"A meeting is being held today," said the cemetery official who declined to give his name.

Some late leaders, including President Li Xiannian and politburo Standing Committee member Chen Yun, were buried at Babaoshan. Others were cremated, their ashes placed in urns in memorial halls.

An official in the Cabinet spokesperson's office said the party would honor Zhao with some form of state-sanctioned funeral.

"Relevant departments will discuss with comrade Zhao Ziyang's relatives to properly handle his funeral arrangements," she said.

However, China had shifted away from grandiose funeral ceremonies for leaders, she noted.

Zhao's family had elected to forgo requesting a state funeral, which would require flags to be flown at half mast on Tiananmen Square, at the secretive Zhongnanhai leadership compound and at foreign embassies in Beijing, sources said.

Instead, the family has chosen to mark his passing with a less sensitive gathering of relatives, close friends and others who wished to pay their respects at Zhao's home.

Mourners have been filing into his home, but plainclothes security forces have turned back many. Dissidents have been barred from leaving their homes.

A source familiar with party protocol said the authorities were preparing a eulogy that would be read at the farewell ceremony only if the family agrees to its contents.

"It needs the approval of the family," said the source who spoke on condition of anonymity. *Reuters*

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Bird flu claims 6th death in Vietnam

HANOI—Health experts are bracing for a repeat of last year's bird flu outbreak after six people died in Vietnam within three weeks and neighboring Thailand reported its first case among poultry this year.

Outbreaks among poultry have been reported nationwide in Vietnam, and health experts say the pattern looks worrying similar to last year, when the virus spread rapidly just before the Lunar New Year holiday, or Tet. It quickly appeared in nine other Asian countries, killing or forcing the slaughter of more than 100 million birds and jumping from poultry to people in Vietnam and Thailand, where 26 and 12 people died respectively.

"It has a higher fatality rate than the Ebola virus," said Hans Troedsson, WHO representative in Vietnam, where more than 70 percent of those infected have died.

"Since Tet is a time when people are traveling and more poultry is going to the market, more poultry is being slaughtered, and poultry is more consumed and transported, there is, of course, a high risk of the spread of the virus and infection," he said of the holiday that starts Feb. 9.

WHO and other health experts have expressed concern that avian influenza could evolve into the next global pandemic—killing millions worldwide—if the virus mutates and human-to-human transmission occurs. There is, however, no evidence of that having occurred yet.

The health agency has also cautioned against transporting poultry from places affected by bird flu into areas hit by last month's tsunami that killed as many as 220,000 people—although numbers have varied drastically—and left thousands homeless. It stressed that infected poultry must be "kept out of the food chain, including emergency food relief activities."

But Klaus Stohr, WHO's influenza chief in Geneva, has said areas affected by the disaster have not experienced previous bird flu outbreaks and the tsunami itself does not create a greater risk for a flu pandemic to emerge.

On Wednesday, an 18-year-old woman became the sixth person to die of bird flu in Vietnam since Dec. 30, after eating an infected chicken, officials said. No one else in her family, including her sister who slaughtered the bird, showed any sign of the disease.

Thailand on Thursday reported its first confirmed case of bird flu in poultry in two months after a dead chicken tested positive for the deadly H5N1 strain.

Members of the family in eastern Thailand that raised the chicken were also tested for the virus, but were negative. Still, strict surveillance was imposed in a 5-km area where the infected bird was found, officials said.

Vietnam has banned the import of poultry from neighboring countries and 200,000 pamphlets have been distributed in Ho Chi Minh City advising people to avoid eating birds and coming into contact with them. *AP*

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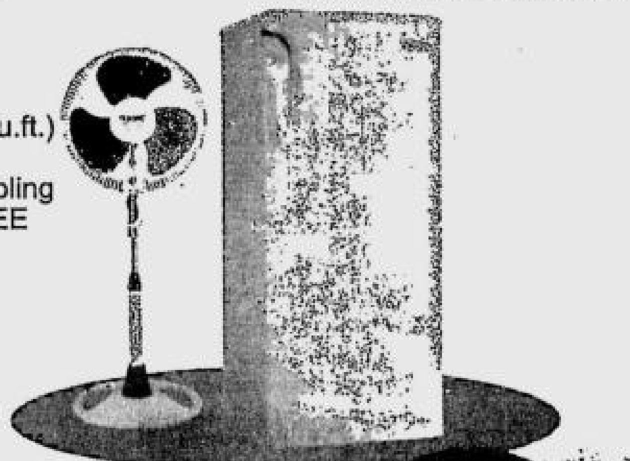

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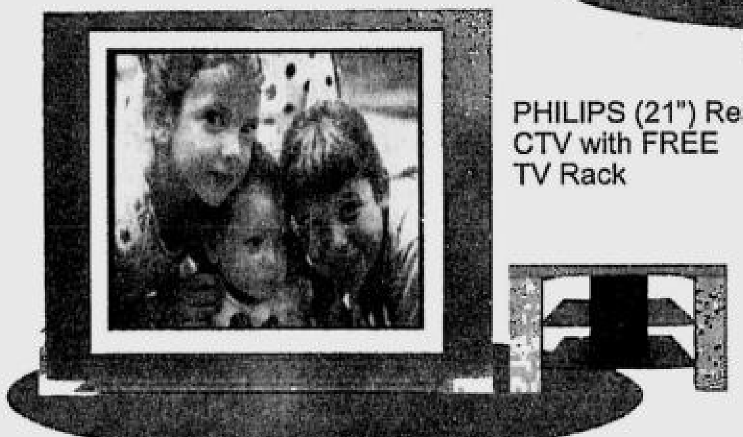

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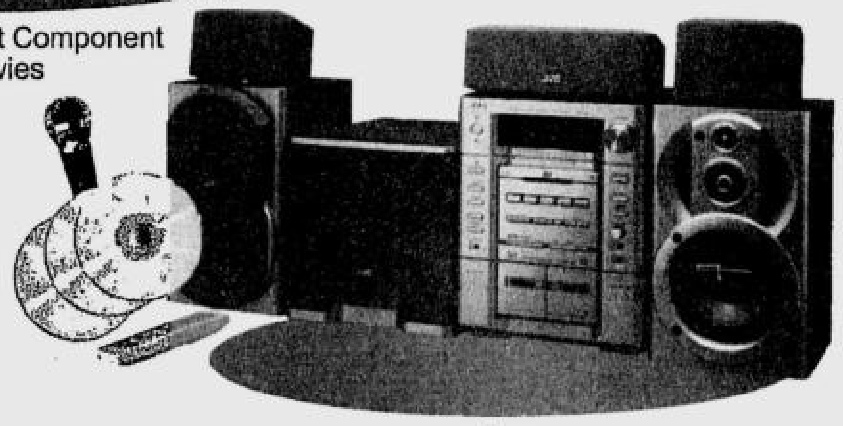

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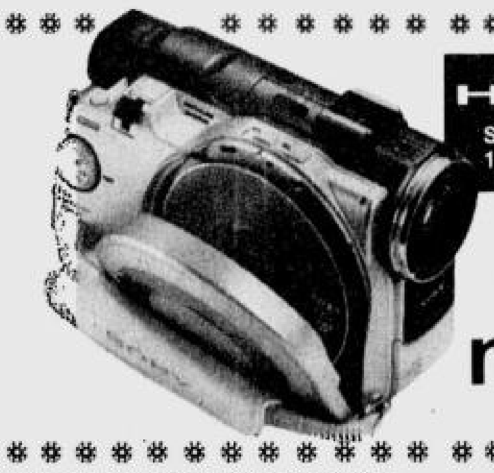

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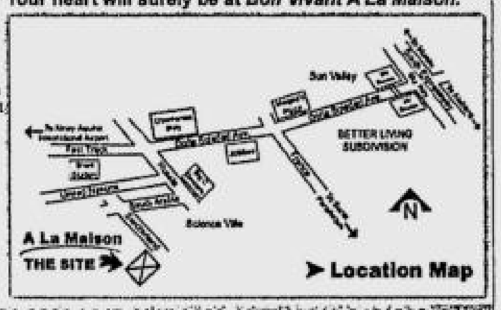

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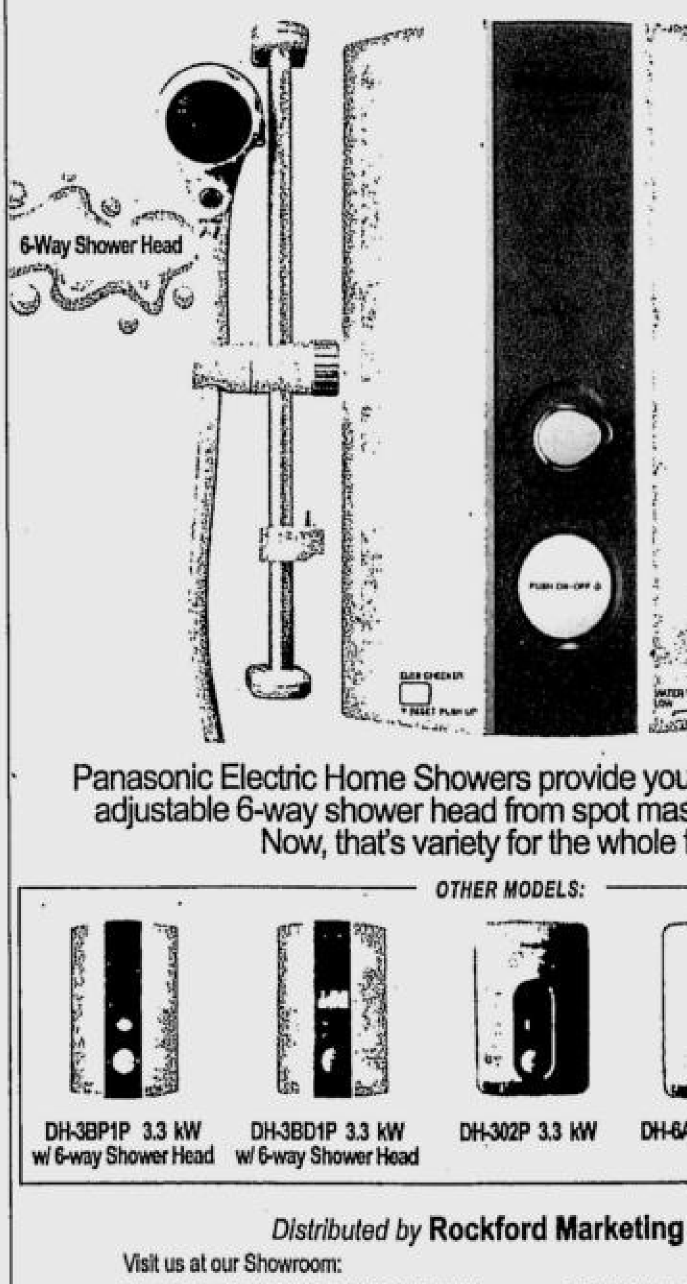

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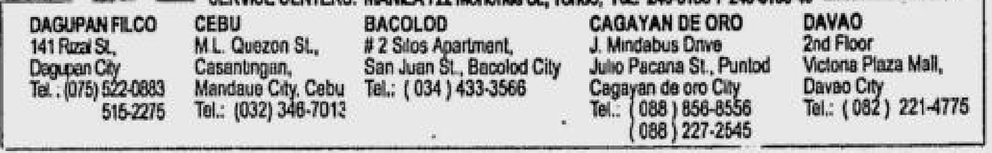

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Spanish church accepts condom use against AIDS

MADRID—Distancing itself from the robust conservatism of Pope John Paul II, the Roman Catholic church in Spain has for the first time accepted the use of condoms as part of an integrated strategy in the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

"The preservative has its place in the context of the integral and global prevention of AIDS," said Wednesday the Rev. Juan Antonio Martinez Camino, secretary general of the Spanish conference of bishops following a meeting with Health Minister Elena Salgado.

The Socialist government in November launched a campaign to promote condom use, and at that time the bishop's conference cast doubt on the efficacy of the policy. Camino said then that the government "was not completely truthful" about the security of condoms, provoking criticism from the government, scientists and anti-AIDS associations.

US actress and Youth AIDS Global Ambassador Ashley Judd at a workshop of the All Africa Conference of Churches in Nairobi, Jan. 19. Judd is visiting programs run by Youth AIDS. REUTERS

But the church, which is at loggerheads with the government over a range of other issues, including gay marriage and divorce, appeared to soften its stand in December, when Camino wrote to Salgado offering to move toward a common position in the fight against AIDS.

After meeting the minister, Camino said the church was willing to cooperate and seek understanding with the government to deal with such a grave problem. However, he stressed the church's commitment to abstinence— even between married couples—and fidelity as the most important means of stopping the epidemic.

Roman Catholic teaching forbids the use of condoms because they are a form of contraception, and the Vatican has repeatedly banned their use.

In 2003, the national center for epidemiology recorded 130,000 cases of HIV/AIDS among people aged between 15 and 49.

An opinion poll published this week by the ministry of labor indicated that condoms are regularly used by nearly 80 percent of the population.

The daily El Pais said Camino's statement was "the first time that a representative of the Spanish church has come out so clearly in favor of the use of preservatives."

The church in Spain, which has a reputation for conservatism and strict alignment with the views of the Vatican, has vigorously criticized other government policies on ethical or moral issues, such as promotion of gay marriages, an easing of restrictions against divorce, the end of compulsory religious education in public schools or support for stem cell research.

Religious practice in Spain is in free-fall according to the labor ministry poll, with just over 14 percent of those between the ages of 15 and 29 defining themselves as practicing Catholics. *AFP*

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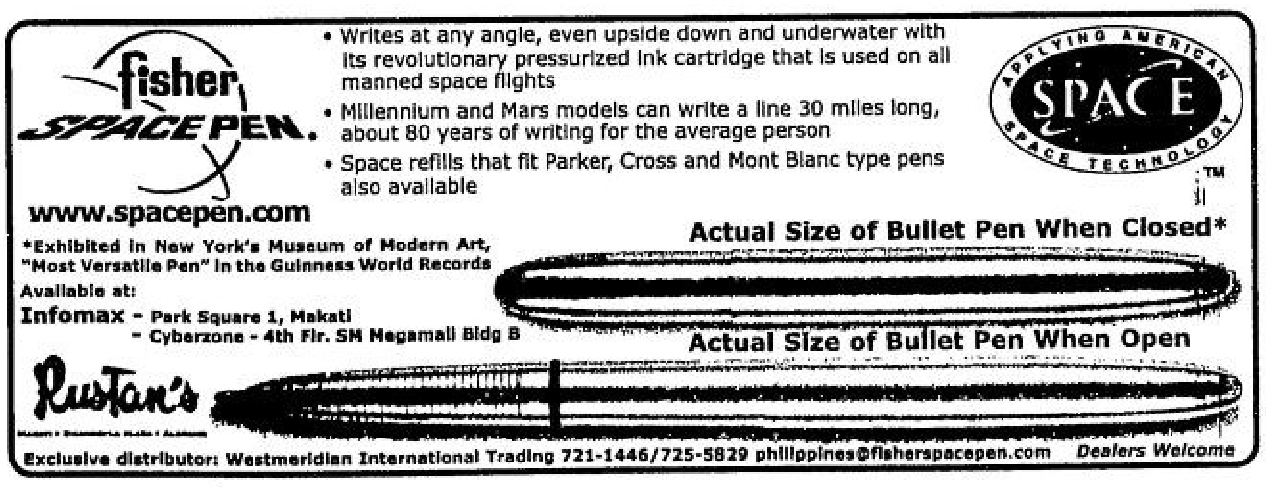

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Tsunami warning system promised in 12-18 months

KOBE, Japan—With memories of the killer Asian tsunami fresh in their minds, officials from around the world pledged on Thursday to establish a tsunami warning system in the Indian Ocean within 12 to 18 months.

The Dec. 26 tsunami that killed more than 226,000 people *(See story on opposite page)* and left millions homeless made the warning system a top priority for a United Nations-sponsored conference on disaster prevention.

"In the matter of a year, at latest 18 months, there should be a basic regional capacity on tsunami early warning," Salvano Briceno, director of the UN's disaster reduction body, told a news conference after a session on the Indian Ocean disaster.

He said that available technologies would be used a first and gradually added on to, or upgraded, 'wit time. Educating people to the dangers of a tsunam and what to do in case one strikes—seen as a crucia part of the tsunami warning process—may take sligh ly longer.

"We have to respond to the dangers of tsunami a soon as possible so we have to use what we have t hand," Briceno said in the western Japanese city o Kobe that was devastated by a strong earthquake decade ago.

UN experts will visit Asian nations, including India an Thailand, over the next week to see what their needs are an what they can offer in terms of technology.

A ministerial meeting on the warning system is set fo Jan. 28 and 29 in Phuket, Thailand.

The system is likely to be modelled on the Hawai based Pacific warning system—set up in 1960 after a earthquake in Chile triggered tidal waves that kille more than 100 people in Japan and other Pacific na tions—with modifications as needed for local cond tions.

Funding remains incomplete, but Japan ha pledged some $4 million and Sweden $1.5 million Briceno said.

Numerous proposals have been made for the system by countries attending the conference, and critics say in tegrating these competing ideas, and coordinating e forts to help, could make it hard to get the system off th ground, which UN officials deny.

"It's a great thing that (there) is so much vitality and s much happening at the same time," said Jan Egeland, th director of UN Emergency Relief.

Japan is the site of some 20 percent of the world' earthquakes of magnitude 6 or over, which have als left a history of devastating tsunamis—experience has put to good use in setting up a tsunami warnin system that aims to issue a warning within three min utes.

Officials said Tokyo was eager to share its knowledg and skills.

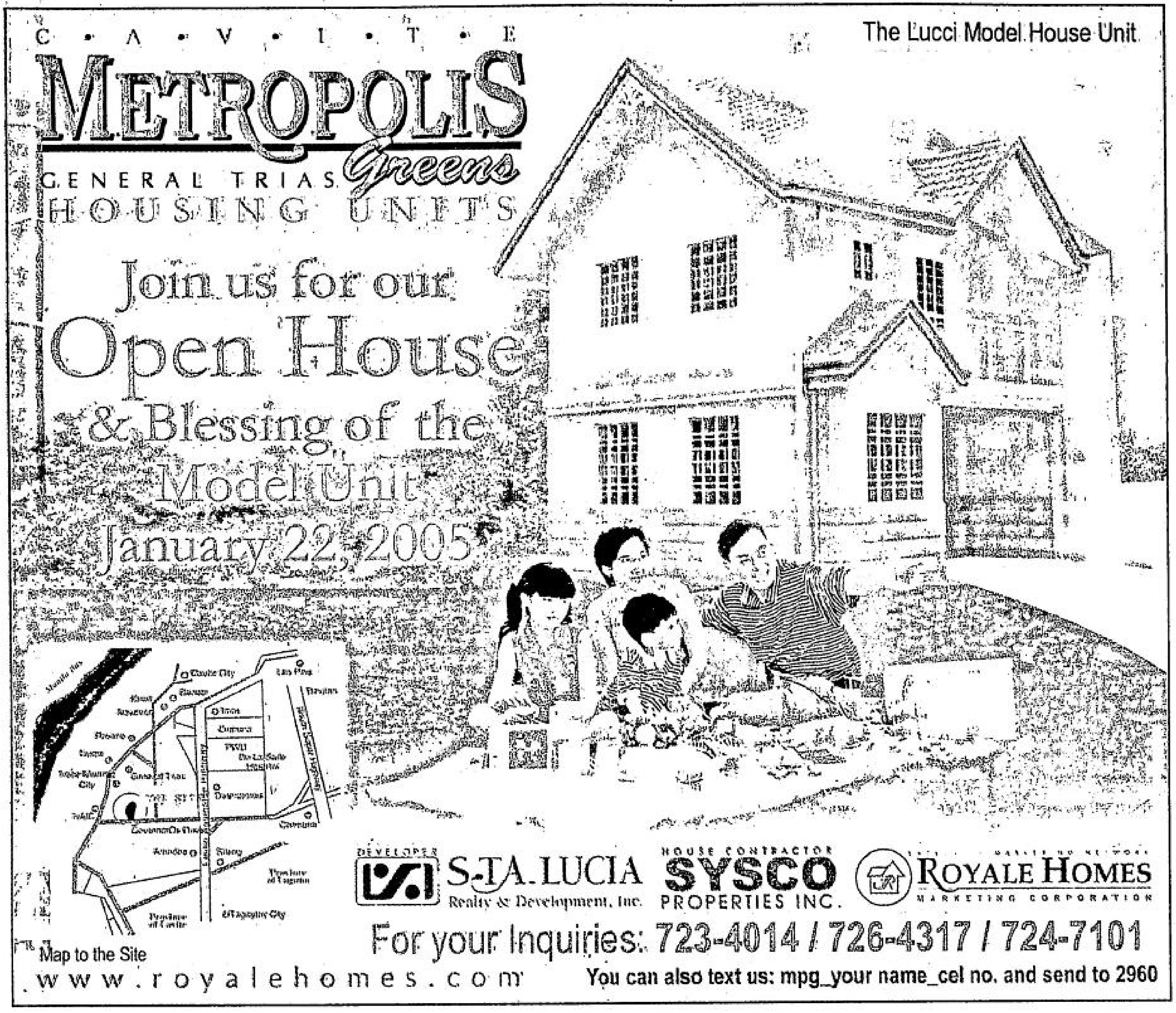
"The Japanese government has taken a very positiv initiative," Shuzen Tanigawa, Senior Vice Minister fo Foreign Affairs, told the news conference.

Disaster Minister Yoshitaka Murata said this was du to its extensive experience with the killer waves, bu some in the media have said it may be an effort to gai extra clout in the region.

Some at the Kobe conference fear that other goal such as reducing deaths from more frequent natural di asters such as floods, typhoons and drought, may b overshadowed by the tsunami and that the conference i self may yield nothing concrete.

"There is still time for a positive outcome," said Ev von Oelreich, head of disaster preparedness for the Inter national Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Soci eties. "But there is a very real danger that all we will get rhetoric."

Reuter



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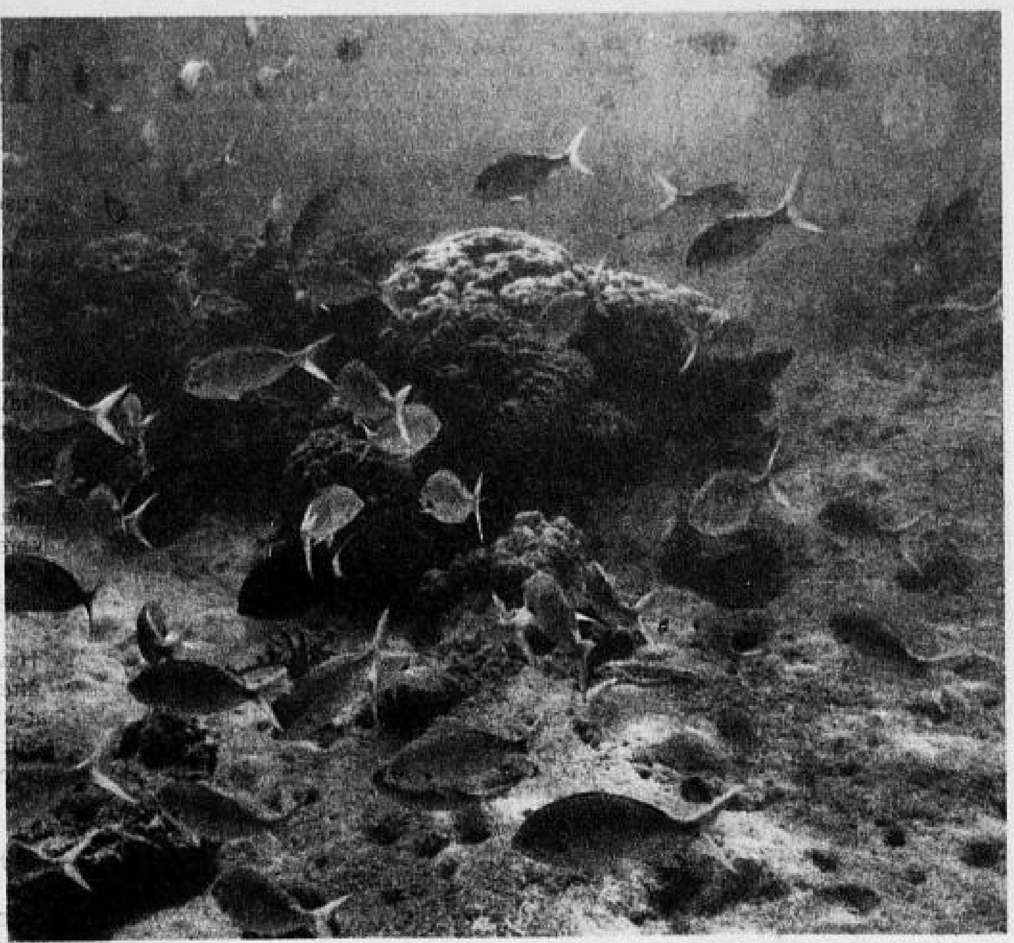


FISH swim in the waters around coral reefs in the Andaman and Nicobar islands, India, Jan. 14. Coral reefs in the island chain have been badly damaged by the tsunami waves and are in danger of being smothered by sand deposits, a team of marine researchers say. AP

Quake-tsunami deaths top 226,000

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—The global death toll from the Asian tsunami shot above 226,000 on Wednesday after Indonesia's health ministry confirmed the deaths of tens of thousands of people previously listed as missing.

The ministry raised the country's death toll to 166,320. It had previously given a figure of 95,450 while Indonesia's Ministry of Social Affairs had put the death toll at around 115,000 before it stopped counting.

Dodi Indrasanto, a director at the health ministry's department of health affairs, said the new death total reflected the latest reports from the provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra, which were directly in the path of the killer tsunami spawned by a magnitude 9 earthquake the day after Christmas.

The new figure lifted the total global death toll from the tsunami disaster to 226,566, although the number continues to rise as more deaths are reported around the region.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, speaking before the health ministry released its latest figures, told a donors conference in Jakarta that the true extent of the catastrophe defied description.

"Perhaps we will never know the exact scale of the human casualties," he said.

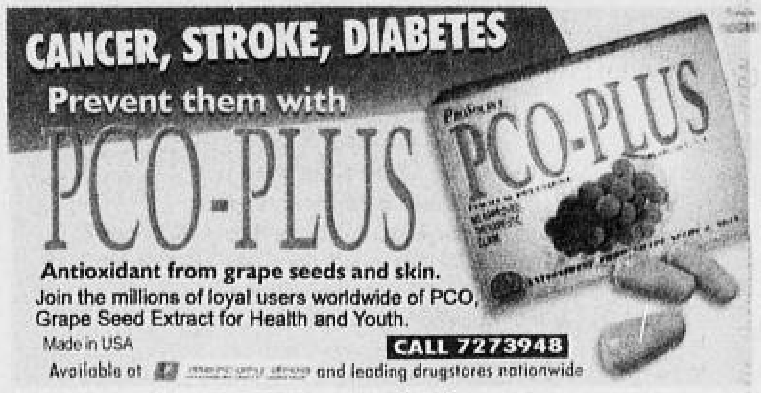
Indrasanto said the health ministry report, which had just 6,245 people still listed as missing, had been sent to Yudhoyono late on Wednesday.

The ministry's figures said 617,159 people were still homeless in northern Sumatra more than three weeks after the killer wave struck.

The staggering death count came as Indonesia said it was hopeful of holding talks with rebels in Aceh, where the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) has waged a bloody, three-decade long battle for independence from Jakarta's rule.

Security fears prompted by the GAM conflict have been a worrying backdrop to the massive international relief effort in Aceh, where huge stretches of coastline were laid waste by the earthquake and tsunami that followed.

"Behind the cloud there must be a silver lining. Behind the scenes, a process is happening towards reconciliation," Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda said. *Reuters*



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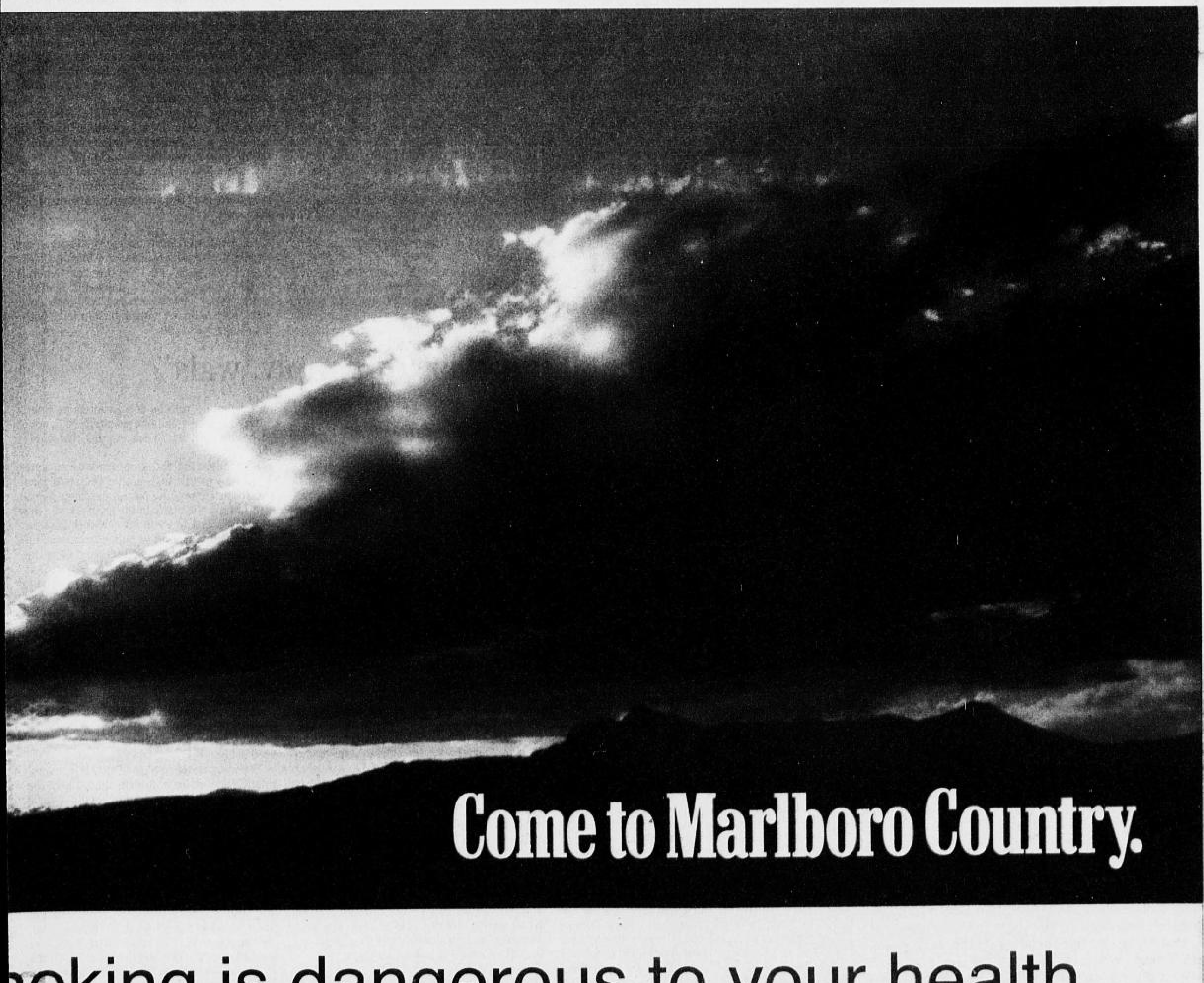

oking is dangerous to your health

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OPINION

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Downgraded

EDITORIAL

NOW that the feared-for has come true—a sovereign credit downgrade from Standard & Poor's—comes the finger-pointing between Malacañang and Congress. If the blame-pinning continues, then the country risks a further downgrade.

It may be that the government can take comfort in the confidence of the business community in the face of the credit downgrade. Most of these businesses have either fully funded expansion plans plus liquidity requirements over the medium term or have converted their dollar-denominated obligations into peso debts. But we must remember, this is the case for big business conglomerates. What about medium businesses and recent investors?

The government had it coming, of course. Either through its own complacency or recklessness, it drove up the budget deficit to astronomical levels. There had been some misgivings about President Macapagal-Arroyo's claim early in her second term that there was a fiscal crisis, following the critique of the country's financial standing by 11 University of the Philippines economics professors. Some sectors had looked at the admission as overkill, a ploy to compel Congress to pass new tax measures. In fact, the just resigned national treasurer, Mina Figueroa, had tried to clarify that the country was not in a fiscal crisis. She said however that if the country did not do something to stem the deficit, then it would slide into a crisis.

To be sure, the Philippines might not have slid into a fiscal crisis, but it has slid into a credit downgrade. Depending on how the government reacts to the development, then the country may risk a crisis, which doomsayers paint along the contours of the Argentina debacle in 2002. And if the buck-passing that has characterized the reactions of the executive branch and the legislature is any indication, then the Philippines could indeed go the way of Argentina sooner or later.

Ah, but the President had declared ahead of the credit downgrade that the fiscal crisis was a thing of the past. This was an instance of crisis handling by wishful thinking. She did not get her wish. Instead she got a downgrade.

The President's declaration was characteristic of the way she handles relations with Congress. If she can't have her way, then she declares the crisis is past or on the way to resolution. When the finance department failed to totally upgrade the sin taxes because of the reservation of lawmakers, she beat a retreat and said that the watered-down version of the bill would do. Apparently, Standard & Poor's thinks otherwise.

Similarly, Congress has been acting in its typically queasy way in response to new tax measures proposed by Malacañang. It has either been politely stalling or outright rejecting any request for new or improved taxes. In short, it has been acting irrationally.

In the first place, there's no rational basis for Congress to reject offhand the tax measures proposed by the executive. Increasing the excise taxes on tobacco and liquor is only practical because both are sin products whose consumption must be regulated. In the same way, widening the value-added tax to cover lucrative professions is not only practical but fair.

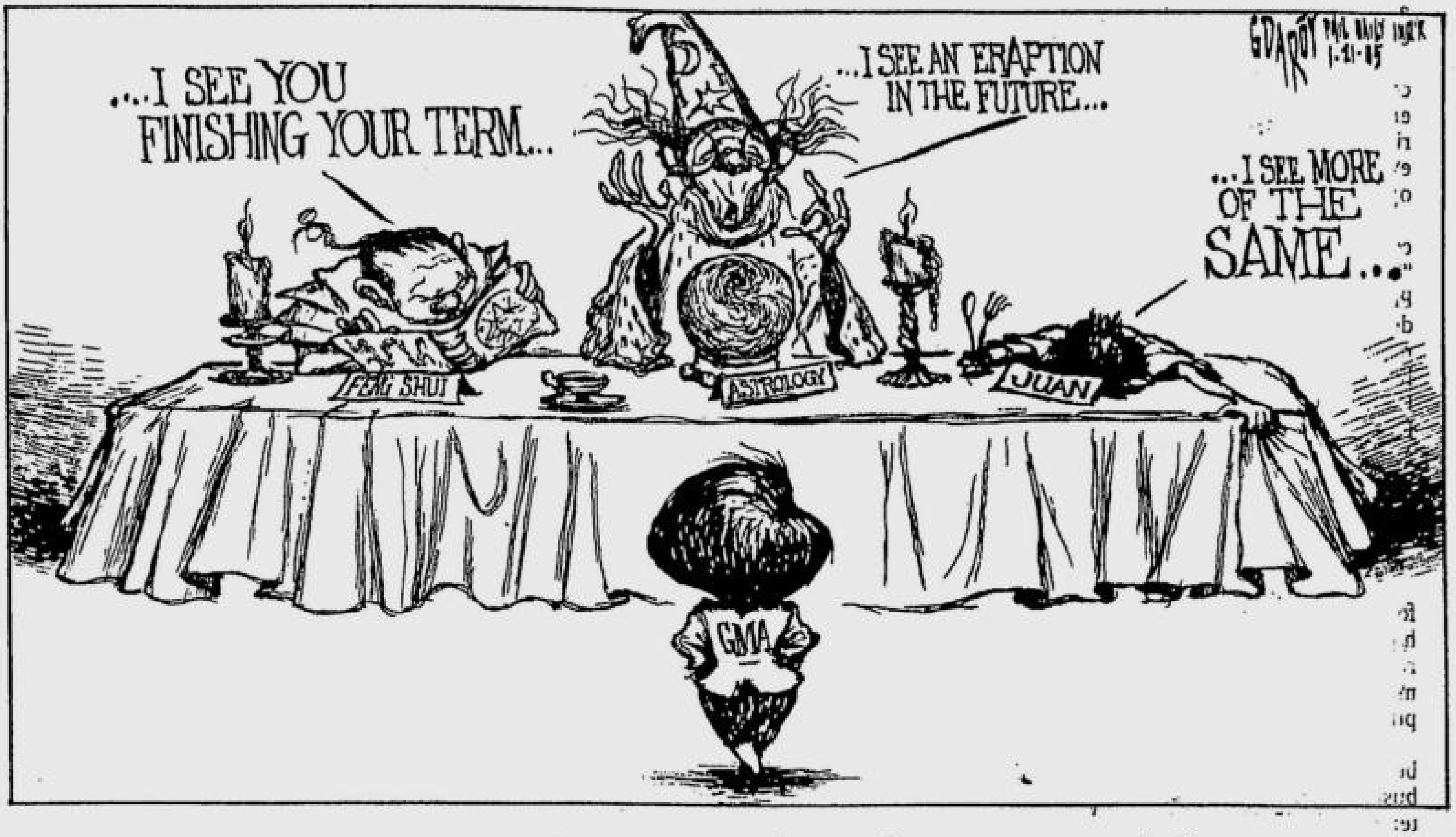
Strictly speaking, widening the VAT coverage is not a new tax measure; it's merely improving on a tax measure and plugging the loophole.

While Congress frowns on new tax measures to stem the fiscal menace, it seems unwilling to cut its pork barrel. It passed the 2005 budget with nary a gesture to cut the representatives' P65-million and the senators' P200-million pork barrel.

Considering that the President enjoys comfortable majorities in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, it is unacceptable that she has gone about pulling the nation out of what she admitted to be a fiscal crisis in a manner that has been half-hearted and even clumsy.

The President's weak response to the threatening fiscal crisis has been tentative and clumsy, belying her claim that she's firmly in control together with her vast coalition. If she and the administration lawmakers fail to get their act together and bite the bullet, then they doom the entire nation. It's not as if she's powerless to stop the crisis. Indeed, what is she in power for?

If at all, the protracted fiscal crisis and the weak responses to it have unmasked the canker in our sovereignty—a powerless leadership that obtains because the people in power don't know how and when to use power where and when it is needed. There is a crisis ahead and we are drifting into it.


...I SEE YOU FINISHING YOUR TERM...
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People want to know who their president is

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WITH FERNANDO Poe Jr. dead, should his election protest against President Macapagal-Arroyo be continued? There are legal experts who believe that the poll protest died with FPJ, but there are also those who say it can, and should be, continued. In fact, there are precedents wherein the Supreme Court allowed the running mate of a protesting loser to take over the poll protest when the principal died before the case was finished.

This was the topic of the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday where Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos and lawyer Romulo Macalintal took opposing sides. Macalintal, who is GMA's counsel, said the case should be dismissed outright and buried with FPJ. Marcos, on the other hand, said that on the contrary, there is now a more urgent need to determine who really won the election. She said the tens of thousands of people who flocked to FPJ's wake and funeral and the thousands more who signed the petition urging his widow Susan Roces to take his place in the protest, show how great is the following of FPJ and who believe that their idol won the presidency but was cheated.

I personally believe that GMA's popularity rating is on a crash dive because of this belief—not only of FPJ fans but of a majority of the population—aside of course from the fact that the living conditions of most Filipinos are getting worse and that GMA's promised reforms are not getting off the ground.

If GMA is to recover her approval rating, she has to prove that she did not cheat and that she won fair and square. The only way to do that is to go ahead and hear FPJ's protest.

Indeed, if I were GMA and I know I did not cheat, I would like nothing better than to prove my detractors wrong by pushing for the recount. For that is the only way I can remove any doubt in the minds of the people of my legitimacy.

On the other hand, if I know I cheated, I will do everything in my power to stop the recount because I will be found out.

So if she blocks the protest before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (her counsel has already filed a motion to dismiss), the people will think GMA is afraid the truth will come out. And if the PET votes to dismiss the protest, the people will believe that it is part of the conspiracy. Tragically, collateral damage will affect the Supreme Court and the whole judicial system, now already rocked by a number of scandals.

Looking back, it is clear that GMA is deathly afraid of the popularity of the movie idol from the very beginning. Instead of facing him squarely before the electorate, she tried to have FPJ disqualified by producing falsified records tending to show that he was not a Filipino citizen. In the counting of votes for president and vice president, her allies in Congress successfully blocked every attempt by the opposition to look at the statement of votes to determine conclusively the number of votes that the candidates garnered.

When FPJ died, GMA showed that she was more afraid of him dead than alive. She barricaded herself in Malacañang on the day of his funeral, as if expecting an invasion, and pitifully pleaded with the military "to stand by" her and not to desert her as it did to President Estrada during Edsa 2. In Shakespeare's play, Macbeth is terrified by the ghost of Banquo because he knows he is guilty. He had had Banquo murdered by his hired assassins. Is the same feeling of guilt behind GMA's fear of her dead rival?

FPJ is dead; he cannot take over the presidency anymore. Why bother to go through with the recount? Because the people want to know with certainty who won the election. Leave them in doubt and GMA will be saddled with a handicap. People will doubt she is the legitimate president. The notion that she stole the presidency from Erap and then stole it again from his friend FPJ will gain credibility.

As Marcos said, it is no longer just FPJ and his followers who want to know. It is the people. Susan won't take over the presidency if FPJ wins in the recount. The people just want to know.

The PET should not hide behind technicalities. For the sake of the stability of the nation, it should exercise "judicial statesmanship" and satisfy the craving of the people to know with certainty who is their president.

* * *

Don't forget the formal inauguration of the Front Page piano bar and Plaridel's art gallery and clubhouse on T.M. Kalaw Street (opposite the National Library), Manila, this coming Monday, Jan. 24, at 6:30 in the evening. All journalists and their friends from the government, business, public relations and the diplomatic corps are invited.

An exhibit by two artists, paintings by Malang and sculptures by Julie Lluch on a common theme, "Women," will open at the third floor gallery on the same day. Malang and Lluch are two of the foremost interpreters of a popular subject in Philippine art, the Filipino woman.

Famous impersonator Willie Nepomuceno and a new GMA look-alike (down to her size) plus celebrity singers will entertain the guests during the cocktails.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza will head the guests of honor and induct into office the new officers of the Samahang Kartunista ng Pilipinas.

* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES: Guests at the Kapihan sa Manila this coming Monday are MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando and PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay. Topic: You guessed it, MMDA's controversial "wet flag scheme," the traffic anarchy and Aglipay's "misunderstanding" with Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

Naia taking: wise or simply 'wais'?

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

AFTER MUCH delay, the government is expropriating the newly built Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 (Naia 3). The Supreme Court had earlier nullified the construction contract, after the terminal had already been built, saying it was tainted with fraud, while the German builders had in turn sued the Philippine government before international arbitrators to collect payment.

I cannot blame the Filipino public for applauding the government's bold taking of private property. The old Naia should have been renovated long ago. As a Filipino, each time I arrive at the Naia, I am convinced I am truly back in the Third World and ask myself why other developing countries have more modern airports, which after all are self-financing and can certainly earn their upkeep. And to think the Naia is the first part of the Philippines that our visitors see. The new airport would thus not waste away while the lawyers tangled in legal proceedings that can drag on for years.

When we Filipinos pronounce "wise" in two syllables (as "*wa-is*"), we do not refer to the seasoned judgment of the elders, or the intuitive call of the just. Rather "*wais*" means sly, street smart, crafty, cunning or wily, or at best, shrewd and clever. The truly wise look at enlightened self-interest, and ask how our concrete actions today can re-write the rules that will govern us tomorrow (the "Kantian imperative," the philosophers say). The "*wais*" are bound to the here and now, and fixate on immediate gain. I see the Naia 3 taking as more "*wais*" than wise. "Nothing doth more hurt in a state than that cunning men pass for wise."

First, by expropriating the Naia 3 under Philippine law, the government shifts the power to determine "how much just compensation" away from internationally recognized, neutral umpires to locally situated courts. Just read the newspapers: the Philippine government has already scored points. The public debate now looks solely at domestic standards for just compensation, namely, the fair market value of the property. Yet how do you price a veritable white elephant sitting on real estate owned by government? Filing suit locally redefines who makes the valuation and by what standards.

Second, by asserting "eminent domain," only two conditions apply: that the property be taken for public use (and it doesn't get more public than an airport), and that just compensation be paid. All of a sudden, the labyrinthine network of fraud and corruption that led the Supreme Court to nullify the Naia 3 contract is forgotten. Corruption is no longer the issue; it was useful only to get the Supreme Court to strike down the contract. Now that it's time to pay the builder, corruption is all forgotten—and the profiteers cry all the way to the bank.

Third, having been sued abroad, the government has now forum-shopped (technicalities aside) and chosen Philippine courts, and even that local forum the government has spurned for not being friendly enough. All along, the government had assured the foreign investors that they would be paid, and indeed offered to pay $62 million up front. When the Pasay City regional trial court took it on its word and ordered it to pay just that initial amount, the government went straight to the Supreme Court and got a restraining order! Sure the cunning would cheer, "See the good of home court advantage?" But the wise should shudder at the brazen arrogance of power.

Finally, a good word for Pasay RTC Judge Henrick Gingoyon who is hearing the case. I do not know him, have never met him, do not have copies of his orders and know only what I read from the newspapers. Government lawyers have harshly criticized him and impugned his impartiality. Come on, guys. The fact that both opposing parties have criticized him means that he must be doing something right, otherwise, if only one side is ecstatic right now, I would be the first to suspect that this whole show is scripted.

RTC judges are under tremendous pressure when they handle high-profile and politicized cases. The contending parties pay their publicists to fight the battle in the media, while the poor judge is solitary in his chamber, without the means to respond to public criticisms; indeed he is barred by his ethics from debating issues in public. The Supreme Court has spokesman Ismael Khan to speak in its behalf; RTC judges do not have one. The solitary judge therefore has to bear the full brunt of public pressure, and he can do so only with personal strength and confidence in the correctness of his rulings. Some of them cave in and simply go along because swimming against the tide makes one "controversial," and that is bad news if they wish to be promoted to the Court of Appeals. Some have been assassinated, praised as "heroes" in death but without the support and encouragement they could have used in life.

The independence of the Pasay RTC expropriation proceedings, in fact, should help the Philippine government ensure that our judicial processes are respected in the arbitration proceedings. The adequacy of our judicial system has often been questioned, recently in a request for extradition before a Canadian court. "The fundamental issue is whether Canada can rely on the adequacy of the legal safeguards in the Philippines." They didn't ask for much; our standards of justice would be acceptable unless it "shocked the conscience" and was "simply unacceptable." The Canadian court was amazed that "the very institution to which the appellant would have to look for protection from delay and political manipulation and interference [would be] the cause of the unconscionable delay."

Even by those minimum standards, we were judged and found wanting.

* * *

Comments to raul.pangalangan@up.edu.ph

Misplaced concern

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

IT strikes me as odd that, in determining a "fair and just" compensation to Piatco and its German partner, Fraport, for building the controversial Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, there is more concern for the interests of Piatco than those of the Filipino people to whom the costs of compensation will eventually be passed.

There is a universal chorus across the business community and the political elite that Piatco is entitled to compensation as a constitutional right, following the decision of the government to expropriate the mothballed terminal to ensure its opening.

No one has disputed that Piatco is entitled to compensation, but the issue is over how much is "fair and just." In the concern to give a fair shake to Piatco, the reaction from business chambers, both domestic and foreign, and from senators and representatives, conveys the clear impression that only Piatco is entitled to a "fair and just" settlement. Hardly anyone has expressed the concern that the Filipino public is as much entitled to a fair shake—as if fairness is an exclusive privilege reserved for private interests, including predatory interests that have been officially and judicially declared to have entered a corrupt transaction, such as the contracts awarded to Piatco to build the terminal.

This concern for a "fair and just" compensation for Piatco ignores the fact that the Filipino people have also a right to be protected from a possible rip-off flowing from settlement awards that are more advantageous to Piatco than to the larger public interest.

This distorted notion of concern is disturbing because it reflects an apparently widely held business and political culture that the larger interests of the state are subordinate to those of private interests. This notion implies that when the state acts to curb and regulate predatory actions of the private sector, private interests should be given the benefit of the doubt at the expense of the larger public interest.

The determination of the "fair and just compensation" is now in the hands of a court-appointed commission, with Piatco claiming $565 million and Fraport, $465 million. On Jan. 14, the Supreme Court stopped the Pasay City regional trial court from enforcing its order directing the government to make an advance partial payment of $62.34 million to Piatco ahead of the determination of "fair and just" compensation.

In contesting the lower court's order before the Supreme Court, Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo pointed out that the order "was palpably issued (with) indecent haste, with neither notice to petitioners (Department of Transportation and Communication and the Manila International Airport Authority), nor any motion from the private respondent (Piatco)." Benipayo has sought the replacement of the judge for alleged partiality, noting that the judge unilaterally asked the Land Bank of the Philippines to release the money, displaying "inordinate eagerness to see the money of the Republic released to Piatco." If the money had been released, Benipayo said, the government would have lost more than P3 billion in a useless facility, since the terminal had yet to be inspected and surveyed to determine whether it is fit for operation.

The new controversy over the advance payment order came as a fresh complication in a legal tangle that has surrounded the terminal and has delayed for two years its opening to international flights according to schedule. The decision to take over the terminal and accelerate its opening came in the midst of pressure from the domestic and international business communities for the government to demonstrate its capacity to get things done, holding up the terminal's completion as a test of this capacity.

The Supreme Court's intervention stopping the advance partial payment to Piatco followed and was consistent with its decision on May 5, 2003, annulling the contracts awarded to Piatco on the ground that they were illegal after finding that they were disadvantageous to the public interest and that they were riddled with irregularities and corrupt practices.

The intervention was a correction course to avert awarding to Piatco advantages which were built into the voided contracts that gave the consortium a near monopoly in the distribution of concessions in the new terminal.

In considering the larger public interest in the ever-expanding legal issues over the terminal's opening, it must be pointed out that among the three departments of government—executive, legislative and judicial—it is the Supreme Court that has given credibility and consistency to the anti-corruption campaign. Its underlying commitment to this effort is reflected not only by its decisions on the Terminal 3 case but also by the fact that among the three departments, it is the only one with an ongoing anti-corruption and reform program in place.

It should not be forgotten that the May 2003 Supreme Court decision voiding the Piatco contracts represents a rare congruence of opinion on the part of the executive, legislative and judicial departments regarding the onerous and corrupt nature of the contracts. The decision crystallized the conclusions of the Senate blue ribbon committee inquiry into the transaction and of the justice department which moved to have it nullified by the Supreme Court. The nullification of contracts is not and should not be seen as an initiative solely of the administration to enhance its anti-corruption credentials. It's a tri-institutional signal that the larger public interest has primary claim to protection by the state over private business interests.

Goodwill and good intentions

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN LATE November, typhoons Yoyong and Winnie slammed into Eastern Luzon, with the unusually heavy volume of rains, combined with the effects of rampant logging on the slopes of the Sierra Madre mountain range, creating an environmental and human disaster (more than 1,000 people died) in Quezon and Aurora provinces, and parts of Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija and Bicol. Most devastated were the towns of Infanta, Gen. Nakar, Real, Dingalan, Baler, San Luis and Maria Aurora.

These towns also happen to be near or in areas contested by the New People's Army and the military for well over two decades now. In fact, the townsfolk of Infanta and General Nakar had just declared their towns a "Zone of Peace, Freedom and Development" last September after a march/prayer rally in reaction to several killings related to the armed conflict.

While the fighting was halted briefly in the wake of the deadly mudslides and devastation, news filtered out of the calamity area that a troop of government soldiers had been ambushed even while the soldiers were undertaking relief operations. The news spurred the participants in a peace conference, "Panaw sa Kalinaw" held last Dec. 3-5 in Davao, to call for a "typhoon-related ceasefire," even if only in Luzon, as well as an early and longer Christmas ceasefire.

When the government and NDF peace negotiating panels met in Utrecht, the Netherlands from Dec. 16-17, both parties expressed openness, though only informally, to calling for a ceasefire in the typhoon-affected areas. Soon after, both the Armed Forces and the NPA unilaterally declared ceasefires, but only for the duration of the holiday season. Despite a few violations, the ceasefires were basically honored by both parties. The ceasefires have since lapsed.

* * *

NOW the government and the NDF are challenged to look beyond the emergency and give the survivors in the devastated areas "space and time to heal," to recover from the trauma and loss, return to their ruined homes and farmlands, and then rebuild their lives and start anew.

The Philippine National Red Cross has appealed for, at the very least, a "six-month humanitarian ceasefire," reasoning that this is the minimum period needed to complete the relief operations and get the longer-term rehabilitation and development programs off the ground.

As their informal agreements during the December talks in Utrecht showed, both the government and the NDF are not averse to agreeing on common actions for the common good. There seems to be enough goodwill on both sides to make a go of the humanitarian ceasefire. Perhaps all they need is a little push from us, the public, to show that there is public opinion support for not just a humanitarian ceasefire, but for a just and peaceful end to the armed conflict.

For now, statements of support for the call for a humanitarian ceasefire are circulating among civil society groups (how about parish priests copying the statements and circulating them among their parishioners during Sunday Mass?), in hopes that a massive show of favorable public opinion would spur both government and the NDF into doing the right thing. Communities in the calamity-affected towns are also being asked to issue their own appeal, especially from their standpoint as survivors of the calamity.

Peace groups also propose that personages or groups mutually acceptable to both parties, such as the Catholic Bishops' Conference and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, or the Red Cross, be approached to take the lead role in monitoring the ceasefire.

* * *

BUT even now, peace advocates are looking at steps that they and the townsfolk in the disaster areas could take to make the most of the ceasefire, once it is called.

For one, leaders of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Development, declared in Infanta and General Nakar, could issue a re-declaration of the peace zone. Then volunteers from schools, civic organizations and other such groups could highlight the "window" provided by the ceasefire through humanitarian action, such as helping clean up houses and buildings buried in mud, assisting in infrastructure work, building houses and repairing school buildings, raising funds for sustainable livelihood programs, and pushing for a log ban as well as looking for alternative livelihoods, for those engaged in the timber trade.

Over the long term, say peace advocates, "the ceasefire can be an opportunity for confidence building among the government, the NDF and the citizenry, especially if the ceasefire can be bilateral between the GRP and NDF, with openness to monitoring by local citizens' groups."

If the campaign for a humanitarian ceasefire is successful, the minimum six-month period could also be marked, say peace advocates, "as a period of national solidarity with victims of disasters, including those of the Asian tsunami, a time for acts of sacrifice, generosity, caring and helping others to heal."

Great and grand dreams and schemes—but only if all sides manage to come to an understanding and agreement on the need for an extended ceasefire.

* * *

MEANWHILE, the public is invited to a concert launching the Call for a Humanitarian Ceasefire tomorrow, Saturday, Jan. 22 from 6-9 p.m. at the Conspiracy Garden Café on Visayas Avenue. Entrance to the concert, called "Pagbangon sa Unos–Konsiyerto para sa Kapayapaan," is free, but donations are encouraged. Organizers would also welcome sponsors (with a donation of at least P5,000) and donors (P1,000 or more) to defray expenses as well as to raise money for a debriefing program for local community groups in the affected areas.

Come to the concert and lend your voice to the call for a humanitarian ceasefire for our brothers and sisters badly in need of healing!

The Laguna Copper Plate Inscription

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONE of the rewards of teaching is when a student comes to consult you to clarify something they heard in the lecture or something they came across in the assigned readings. When a student is disturbed by the subject matter and moved to seek an explanation, I think the teacher has done his job.

When students ask questions or e-mail me regarding their assignments, I have to remind them that I am not Ernie Baron, and that I cannot hope to know everything. This may be disappointing to some, but I think dealing with one's ignorance is always fertile. Knowing everything or being a so-called "walking encyclopedia" is definitely sterile.

While I have ready answers for FAQs like: "Is Rizal the father of Adolf Hitler?" or "Do you think Andres Bonifacio dreamed in color?" there are times when I don't have answers. When I sit down briefly with a student to explore the different angles of a question, it often ends in desperation (or maybe inspiration) and I throw up my hands and declare that sometimes it is not so important to get an answer. Sometimes, the mere process of problem solving provides the pleasure. Sometimes grappling with a question and thinking are their own reward.

Having large classes can be an obstacle because students don't want to appear clueless in front of their peers. Thus, some ask their questions during the break, others send a slip of paper up front, others send text or e-mail. All questions are entertained because the impertinent ones or the really odd questions can be quite stimulating. At the end of each semester, I thank my students first, for enduring my lectures (higher education is supposed to equip the student to deal with boredom); second, because I learned a lot more from them than they did from me.

This week a student came up to inquire about the status of the "Laguna Copper Plate Inscription" or "LCI." This is an artifact that is considered one of our pre-colonial cultural treasures and is now displayed in the National Museum. Contrary to what the student learned in an earlier history class, I explained that while I would very much want to accept this artifact 100 percent, there is a shade of doubt hanging over it because we do not quite know where the artifact actually came from. It is not of an impressive size, measuring a mere 20 x 30 cm, leading most museum visitors to pass by without noticing one of the earliest examples of pre-colonial writing. The problem is that this slim copper artifact was not uncovered as a result of a controlled and official archaeological excavation by the National Museum, but was purchased from an antique dealer in 1990. Before that it had been offered to me, and, not knowing its importance, I rejected it. That is one decision I will regret the rest of my life. Hundreds of similar copper plates with similar writing engraved on them can be found in Indonesia, so I wondered what it was doing in Laguna.

To cut a long story short, the text was deciphered by Antoon Postma, in consultation with Johan de Casparis who noted that the language was technically Sanskrit, with some words in Old Javanese, but mainly in Old Malay similar to Old Tagalog. The Postma translation reads:

(1) Hail! In the Saka-year 822; the month of March-April; according to the astronomer: the fourth day of the dark half of the moon; on

(2) Monday. At that time lady Angkatan together with her relative, Bukah by name,

(3) the child of His Honor Manwaran, was given, as a special favor, a document of full acquittal, by the chief and Commander of Tundun

(4) represented by the leader of Pailah, jayadewa. This means that His Honor Namwaran through the Honorable Scribe

(5) is totally cleared of a salary-related debt of one kati and eight suwarna, in the presence of his Honor the leader of Puliran,

(6) Kasumuran: His Honor the Leader of Pailah, represented by Ganasakit; His Honor the leader

(7) of Binwangan, represented by Bisruta. And, with his whole family, on orders of the chief of Dewata

(8) represented by the chief of Mdang, because of his loyalty as a subject of the Chief therefore all the decendants

(9) of His Honor Namwaran are cleared of the whole debt that His Honor owed the Chief of Dewata. This in case

(10) there is someone, whosoever, sometime in the future, who will state that the debt is not yet acquitted of His Honor…

The artifact has resulted in more questions than answers. Is the copper plate Philippine? Or is it imported from Indonesia, Thailand, or Vietnam where similar pieces have been found? If it was made in the Philippines, why isn't the text in the *baybayin* or early Philippine syllabary? Was the LCI made in the Philippines by a Javanese scribe?

The eminent Indologist Dr. Juan Francisco, who has spent a lifetime studying Indian influences in our pre-colonial culture, says that some words in the LCI are truly Philippine and he believes the LCI is Philippine. I guess I will have to take his word for it and imagine that in 9th-century Laguna a debt of gold weighing one kati and eight suwarna was paid. Unlike other receipts that are oral or written on leaf, tree-bark or paper, this was placed on permanent non-corrosive material and survived to remind us of a pre-colonial past.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Replaying Frank Lynch

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

BRAIN drain. Folk Catholicism. "Big and little people." Fiestas. Family planning and the Catholic Church. These are some of the topics in "Philippine Society and the Individual," a collection of essays by Fr. Frank Lynch and his colleagues at the Ateneo Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC), many of which were written in the 1960s and 1970s.

Yet, the anthology, edited by Aram Yengoyan and Perla Makil, with an introduction by Mary Racelis, reminds us that "burning issues" aren't necessarily current events; in fact, the most pressing of these burning issues often need retrospectives such as those that we can derive from "Philippine Society and the Individual."

I'll demonstrate this by focusing on the insights generated in the book around two particular issues—brain drain and family planning—which continue to be among our most urgent concerns as a nation.

Brain drain

The essay on brain drain was written by Walden Bello, Frank Lynch and Perla Makil and first appeared as an IPC paper in 1969, mainly to summarize a "Philippine Brain Drain Survey." Brain drain is described as "a ubiquitous thorn in the relations between the privileged nations and the underprivileged…" with an amazing reference to a noted British scientist, Lord Bowden, describing the repercussions this way: "It is beginning to be a fact that fields in India will remain uncultivated in order that America may put a man on the moon."

Lord Bowden was referring to India's brain drain but we, too, were also suffering in the Philippines. We learn that as early as 1966, there were 2,474 Filipino resident doctors in the United States, constituting a fourth of foreign residents in American hospitals … while back home, even in Manila, our physician-population ratio was 1:671 and in rural areas it was 1 doctor for nearly 5,000 people.

Bello, Lynch and Makil warned us, that early, that the brain drain would affect the way we would develop. They were using an older framework of development as a "take-off" process, and felt that brain drain would prevent us from even taking off.

The essay goes into lengthy discussions of US and Philippine foreign policy as well as development strategies but what struck me was the data the researchers gathered around our educational system and brain drain.

We learn that of all Filipinos who graduated from Philippine colleges, about 7 percent eventually took up permanent residence abroad. Now that's real brain drain. And who contributed most to this brain drain? Adamson University, Ateneo de Naga, University of Santo Tomas, University of the Philippines and De La Salle. Schools with "medium emigration ratios" were Mapua, Ateneo de Manila, College of the Holy Spirit, San Beda and St. Theresa's.

That early, our government planners and educators should have seriously looked into what it was in our educational system, especially in those high emigration ratio schools, and especially at UP, that produced Filipinos for export. Remember the brain drain then was literal because the ones who left were professionals, many scientists and health professionals who could have spelled a difference in our development trajectory.

One could argue that these schools produced Filipinos for export because they were excellent schools. Sure, but we could have looked too at other good schools named in the essay as having low emigration ratios, including for example Maryknoll, Far Eastern University, Philippine Women's University and Silliman to see if their curricula were factors that encouraged graduates to stay and serve the Philippines.

The IPC paper described the brain drain then as "moderately serious," and noted optimistically that among the most academically gifted Filipinos, "the tendency to return is most pronounced." I leave it to readers to decide if this happened.

Family planning

Another essay in the anthology was written by Father Lynch with the intriguing title, "The Catholic Church: Philippines' Silent Partner in Population Control." Let me say I dislike that term "population control" but the essay was written in 1976, before people began to wonder if we were really after population control or family planning.

What's important though is that Father Lynch cites several surveys done in 1967, 1970 and 1971 to show that disapproval of family planning was not really tied to "closeness" to the Catholic Church (measured by such indicators as attendance at a Catholic school, attendance at Sunday Mass, etc.) In the 1970 survey, involving 897 Catholics, 65 percent approved of family planning and again the differences in views were not connected to "closeness" to the church as described above.

In the 1972 survey, involving 649 Catholics, 76 percent approved of family planning, with additional indicators used here, specifically an "orthodox-morality scale," meaning views about a mother's failure to have her infant baptized, eating meat on a Friday in Lent (a mortal sin, if I remember right, at that time!), etc. Again, there was no difference in moral orthodoxy between those who approved and disapproved of family planning.

Again, I suspect the past is present, that if we replicated these studies we would have similar figures today. Certainly, more recent public opinion surveys from Pulse Asia and Social Weather Stations show that Filipino Catholics are following their personal conscience about family planning. The problem though is that conservative Catholic leaders do pressure politicians to distance themselves from family planning.

Interestingly enough, Father Lynch felt that the high approval rates for family planning among Filipino Catholics at that time was due to the Catholic Church's position being one of laissez-faire, meaning letting things be, rather than actively campaigning against family planning. Even more astounding was his recommendation that Catholic bishops and priests should "speak out openly and often against the false morality of those who extol large families and abandonment to Divine Providence as prima facie evidence of supreme virtue."

We know what happened since then, a triumph of that false morality that Father Lynch spoke against. Alas, too often, brilliant minds like Father Lynch were prophets in the wilderness.

I've given only a small sample of what's in "Philippine Society and the Individual" and hope readers will pick up their own copies or order one for their company or school library. And if you do get a copy, read Father Lynch's essay on intellectuals, whom he defines as people who would be "reasonable, truth-hungry, open to new ideas and capable of integrating them with the old, concerned about the things that will always matter to man, including the right use of power and wealth but not his own amassing of them."

That was Father Lynch's definition of a "true intellectual," in an essay written in 1966. Yet the definition has become even more relevant to the country in the 21st century. I hope, for our country's sake, that intellectuals are not doomed to become lonely voices in the desert.

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The Vice President on his report

THIS refers to the Jan. 13 editorial which put in question my accomplishment report.

President Macapagal-Arroyo assigned me several tasks—as chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council; alternate chair of the National Anti-Poverty Commission; presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers; and head of the nationwide campaign to monitor prices. I feel that these positions come with the duty to report to the people what we have done. It is also my belief that each public official is accountable to the people, more so in my case, as the second highest official of the land. My report was submitted for public scrutiny in the spirit of transparency and in accordance with the directive of the President for heads of government agencies to make a report of their accomplishments in 2004.

On the Velarde issue, the Pag-IBIG housing loan was given only after the Amvel group came up with a collateral amounting to P327.7 million that may be forfeited in favor of the government should it fail to pay. The Bank of Commerce funded the initial construction of the Amvel project through a Letter of Credit issued by the Pag-IBIG Fund to complete the units. The fund had no financing participation during the construction phase. It went into the project only after the building had been finished and was ready for occupancy by members of Pag-IBIG, not necessarily of El Shaddai only.

We intend to construct more than a million housing units before 2010 with some percent falling under socialized housing.

Declogging overpopulated Metro Manila is also a main target of the national housing program for the next three years. The rehabilitation of the country's railway system would greatly help in this respect.

As adviser on OFW concerns sent by the President to Libya, I was told by Matuq Mohammed Matuq, Libya's secretary of general services (labor) of that country's preference to hire Filipino doctors, nurses, medical technologists and paramedical workers to address a health care need; and other Filipino professionals to teach Libyans the English language and train them in the field of aquamarine science. We have passed on this information to the concerned agencies for their appropriate action.

As to prices of goods, these were relatively stable. The price increases involving some goods were due to the "abnormal" demand during the holiday season. Most of the goods in great demand were perishable and would spoil if priced out of the consumers' reach. In addition to these, the country suffered from a spate of strong typhoons, which also affected the prices of commodities.

We traced the price increase to, among others, "*kotong cops*" and got the assistance of PNP Gen. Edgardo Aglipay in eliminating the problem.

The report was objectively prepared without any intention to dissociate our accomplishments with those of the Arroyo government.

—VICE PRESIDENT NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO,
vpkabayan@yahoo.com

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New meaning of 'unemployment'

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and the Department of Labor and Employment's definition of the word "unemployed"—to make it mean "one without work but looking for work"—is a mechanism to hide the gory picture of joblessness in the country.

The revised definition excludes mothers because—according to Ms Arroyo's logic—although they are unemployed, they are not looking for jobs anyway.

Women carry the multiple burdens of raising the children, doing household chores and generating income in a country of lost opportunities. Jobless mothers do not look for jobs because they are discouraged to do so by the circumstances of our society. That they are not looking for jobs is an indicator of bad governance.

Mothers should be counted in the labor force so that the country will be able to formulate relevant policies that encourage women to play productive roles as partners in nation-building.

—MIRIAM AZURIN-ABAJA,
113 Isagan St., Caloocan City

Reaction to the 'Tsunami of errors'

THIS is a response to your editorial "Tsunami of errors." (PDI, 1/8/05)

May we clarify some points. Contrary to what the editorial said, the Department of Education is represented in the National Book Development Board (NBDB). Undersecretary Fe Hildalgo is the DepEd representative to the NBDB. Four years ago, she was the NBDB's acting chair.

On the criticism that the NBDB's "New Rule on the Cancellation of Registration of Publishers that Produce Poor Quality Textbooks" covers only private school textbooks, may we point out that the "Book Publishing Industry Development Act," creating the NBDB, specifically states that it is the DepEd—not the NBDB—which shall do the "testing, evaluating, selecting and approving" of books for adoption in the public schools. The NBDB should not penalize publishers for books that it has not evaluated.

The editorial suggests that the new rule penalizes private schools indirectly because the publishers, who hopefully will spend more to produce better textbooks, will pass on the additional cost to the schools. I believe some school administrators should be called to account for their decision to select textbooks primarily on the basis of price and not of quality, or worse, on the basis of under-the-table arrangements with some publishers. Now is the time for parents-teachers associations to recognize the need for vigilance and to require sufficient information from school administrators as regards the process of evaluation and selection of textbooks. Now is also the time for more parents to understand that very good textbooks come with a price.

The primary root of the problem of bad textbooks is the insufficient investment in research and development on the part of many publishers because they consider it too costly to set up their own permanent research units with full-time experts. Thus, the NBDB is urging our legislators to include textbook publishing among the activities that can avail of the proposed fiscal incentive of "double deduction (from taxable income) for R&D."

Finally, we want everybody to know that we recently completed the "National Book Development Plan (2005-2010): Initiatives towards Becoming a Publishing Hub in Asia." One of the priority strategies of this plan is the improvement of the quality of local textbooks through a program of continuous training for textbook writers and the establishment of the NBDB Quality Seal System. We ask all stakeholders to help implement this plan. There is much work of construction, correction and prevention which needs to be done after the "tsunami of errors."

—DENNIS T. GONZALEZ, Ph.D.,
chair, National Book Development Board,
A. Ma. Regidor Street, Area 11,
UP Diliman, Quezon City

Proposed SSS reforms lacking

IT is heartening to know that the Social Security System is planning to amend its charter. (PDI, 1/12/05) Sadly, the proposed reforms are obviously meant only to extract more money from SSS members and contributors. Simply, there are no highly reforms desirable from the viewpoint of the SSS members and contributors. The amendments should include:

1. Reforms to safeguard the SSS from being used as a milking cow of the administration and SSS officers and employees. The salaries of SSS officers and employees should be aligned with the financial industry's rates.

2. Reforms to assure SSS members and contributors that all SSS officers and employees are accountable for their action and/or inaction. Consider the ill-conceived and horribly implemented Annual Confirmation of Pensioners (ACOP). How can the SSS allow payments of pensions to deceased pensioners? How did the SSS fail to improve its pathetic mailing for decades? How about the notorious behest loans? Again, that infamous Equitable PCIBank investment?

3. For transparency, why not post in the SSS website the monthly financial statements, major expenses, major investments, major purchases of goods and services, contracts entered, officers' and employees' compensation and board resolutions? The SSS members and contributors have the right to know how their money is managed. They must be assured that there is no juggling of the book of accounts. The annual audits conducted by the Commission on Audit are ineffective.

The SSS exists for its members and not for the lucky people in the administration, not for its officers and employees, and not for the greedy "properly connected."

—ERNIE IGNACIO,
erncign@ispx.com.ph

Our laws should be for all

AS a bishop of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, I welcome the plan to grant presidential pardon to ailing former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos of the first district of Zamboanga del Norte on theological, moral and humanitarian grounds.

I do not know Jalosjos personally. The Jalosjos siblings (Representatives Cely Carreon and Cesar Jalosjos) represent the first and third districts of Zamboanga del Norte. I voted in Dipolog City, in the second district of Zamboanga del Norte.

As a concerned church leader, I have always respected the principle of separation of Church and State, and did not campaign for any political candidate. I have, of course, prayed over political candidates—for them to be more righteous and God-fearing. I voted for certain candidates who I believed were more qualified according to my personal and my church's guidelines. Some won, some lost. That is the political game.

On theological and humanitarian grounds, it is good to consider pardoning Jalosjos. He is sick, he has already served part of his prison term. Above all, he is God's creature and loved by God. Let the lawyers quibble on the fine prints of the law, but I strongly believe that Philippine laws are not inhuman as to look the other way when an ailing human being, convict or not, has sincerely shown remorse.

It is high time that we review our judicial and penal systems. Human laws are not absolute, they must always be seen from the perspective of God's love and mercy. The moral and theological dimension must always be considered. Moreover, the spirit of the law must prevail over the letter of the law. The Holy Bible adequately demonstrates this in the teaching of Jesus Christ as recorded by the evangelist John: God loves the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son, and is willing to forgive sinners who repent. (John 3:16) Even people who do not believe in the Scriptures, like the *lumads* of Mindanao, have shown a capacity to forgive. In more vivid examples, Jesus Christ called for forgiveness in the case of an adultress and the criminal who was crucified with him on the cross. (John 8:1-11; Luke 23:39-43)

While the sinner is loved by God, the sinned-against is also the subject of God's love and mercy. I suggest that our judicial system, including our penal system, be revised so that it would be more forgiving, more humanitarian, more rehabilitative—not rigidly punitive. Our laws, including the power to grant pardon to convicted criminals, should be for all. Not only for Jalosjos but also for those who deserve more love and concern.

—BISHOP HILARIO M. GOMEZ JR.,
administrative pastor,
United Church of Christ in the Philippines,
Rizal Avenue, Dipolog City

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PAMPANGA SCAM

Irregularities in quarry income collection persist

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Receipts were left blank even if payments had been made in advance. Blank receipts, detached from books and without duplicates, were also in the custody of "checkers" or field employees.

These were the ways by which official receipts for government transactions, known as Form 51, were being handled at one of the busiest lahar checkpoints maintained by the Pampanga provincial government at the boundary of this city and Bacolor town.

These practices persisted four years after the Commission on Audit ordered them stopped.

The order was contained in a March 6, 2000 special audit report that found the capitol's system of collection and remittances from January 1997 to July 1998 as "tainted with irregularities."

Receipts were pre-stamped with the following information: "PTO (Provincial Treasurer's Office)-Pampanga," "Sand fee P150, administrative service fee P150," and "Vergel Yabut, collecting officer."

"As a general rule, the official receipt shall be prepared with the date, name of payor, purpose for which the payment has been received, the amount in figure and in words, mode of payment and pre-stamped name and signature of the collecting officer," the report said.

Drivers were seen surrendering the receipts that served as passes for trucks hauling sand out of Pampanga. One of two checkers assigned to this checkpoint tore each receipt. The upper part, which bore the number of the receipt, was thrown in a plastic bag while the lower portion was returned to the driver.

At past 4 p.m., the bag was filled with about 100 torn receipts.

These checkers held a list of the control numbers of the receipts that were said to have been bought that day. Drivers would not tell from which office they or their operators bought the receipts.

The checkers wrote the control numbers in yellow pad papers, not in a logbook.

One of the checkers kept about 30 unused receipts in a small plastic envelope on this day. These were equivalent to P9,000.

He tried to hide the receipts and declined to answer why he was entrusted with these. Receipts, deemed as accountable forms, were supposed to be bought from Yabut, the provincial treasurer. A policeman from the Special Action Force secured this checkpoint.

Yabut could not be reached for comment and had made himself scarce for INQUIRER interviews.

The provincial board, despite several requests, did not receive copies of the daily statement of collection and accountable forms (DSCAF), according to Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao. DSCAFs are records of collections with corresponding duplicates of receipts.

In Porac, sand haulers paid P70 but were issued only pre-stamped receipts at the checkpoint in Barangay Manibaug-Pasig.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Porac Mayor Exequiel Gamboa and municipal treasurer Manuel Roxas on Tuesday but they did not return this correspondent's calls.

At a quarry site in Barangay San Isidro, Bacolor, haulers paid P20 as a permit to pass from the local government. A temporary receipt was issued for that fee.

The collection system, said Guiao, appeared lenient and put government income at risks to corruption.

Mayor protests frequent visits of former NPAs

DUMAGUETE CITY—The mayor of a southern town has complained of the frequent visits of members of the breakaway Revolutionary Proletariat Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) in the municipality's two adjacent barangays.

Mayor Beda Cañaque of Basay town told members of the Peace and Order Council (POC) on Tuesday that the residents of Barangays Bal-os and Bongalonan were concerned about the presence of these rebels because "they were armed to the teeth."

He said in January, 41 armed RPA-ABB members led by one "Ka Amor" visited the villages three times. Basay is about 130 km south of Dumaguete.

"We do not know their purpose. But why was it that they were armed to the teeth. They were bringing M-60 submachine guns, M-14 and M-16 Armalite rifles. They did not also coordinate with our local police," the mayor said.

"With their number and the kind of firearms that they were bringing, they could wipe us out in Basay," he said.

Negros Oriental Gov. George P. Arnaiz, who was in the POC meeting, said RPA-ABB members should not bring firearms when visiting villages. *Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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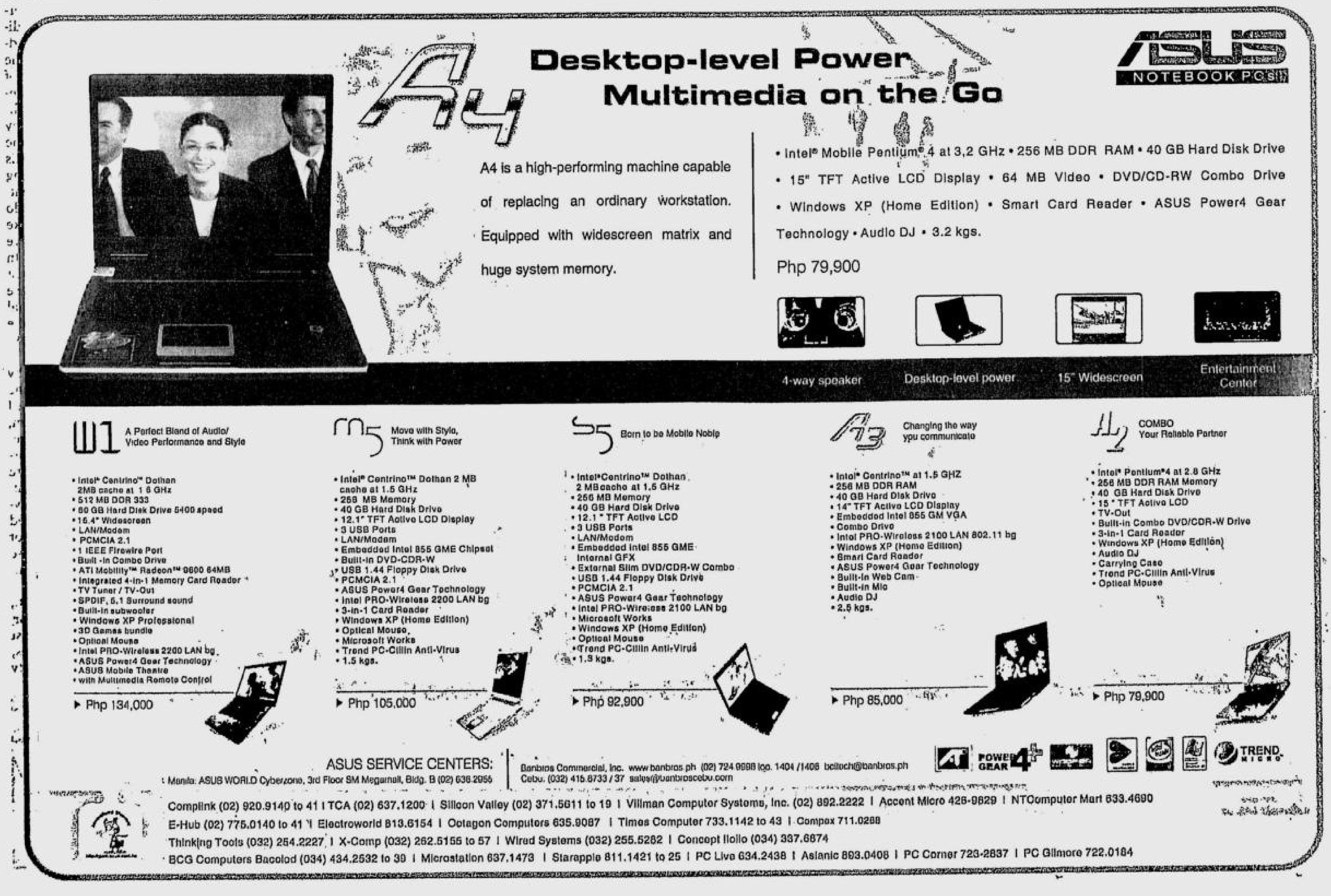

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₱300,000 reward up for massacre suspect

IMUS, Cavite—Police and government officials in Cavite, including Sen. Bong Revilla, yesterday raised P300,000 as reward for the immediate capture, dead or alive, of farmer Federico Rupido, the main suspect in the killing of three members of a family in Indang, Cavite.

Dead or alive

After issuing a shoot-to-kill order, Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, Cavite police director, facilitated the raising of the bounty for Rupido's head, which he said would be given "to anyone who could turn him over to the police, dead or alive."

"Frankly speaking, he's a dead man walking. The police are trailing him. We will also put his pictures in all conspicuous places," Rosales said of Rupido who gunned down three members of the Diate family after a quarrel over the family letting dirty water stream into their neighbor's lot on Tuesday night.

Four other family members, including the couple's three children, survived the attack.

Witnesses said that a few hours before the killings, Rupido was seen in a drinking session while attending a neighbor's wake.

Rosales said Gov. Ayong Maliksi was the first to pledge P100,000 for the suspect's arrest.

Revilla, Indang Mayor Lope Tepora, Cavite 3rd District Rep. Crispin Remulla and an anonymous businessman each pledged P50,000.

He said the reward money could go up to as high as P500,000 as the Philippine National Police (PNP) was set to add to it.

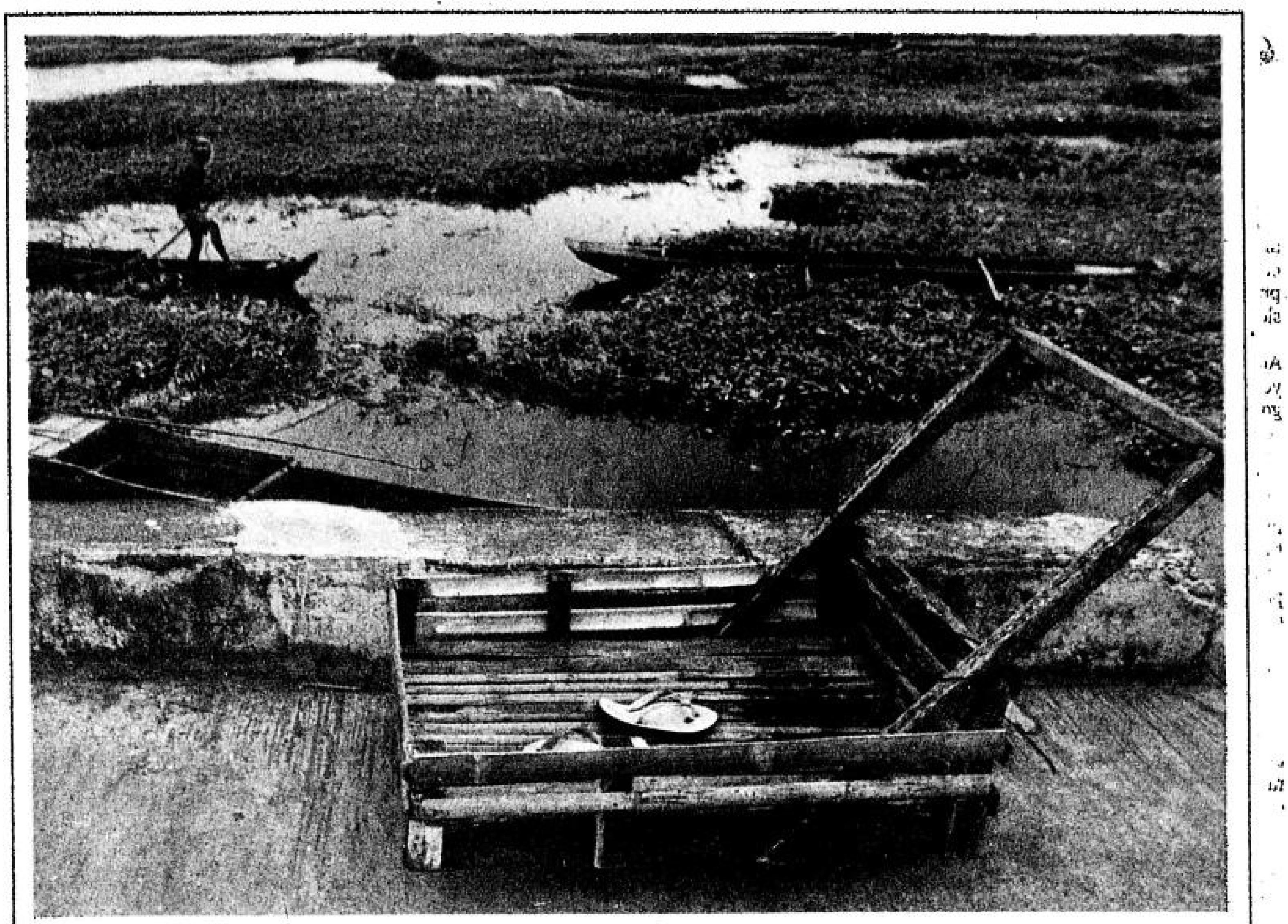
Most wanted

He said they would also ask the Department of Interior and Local Government to include the suspect in the province's most wanted list.

Rosales said he had already deployed six tracking teams to locate Rupido's whereabouts.

Each team has four members, he said.

He, however, admitted that they have yet to secure an arrest warrant as the case has yet to be filed as of yesterday. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



RAFFY LERMA

DAY AT THE BAY

A wooden push cart, empty but for a pair of slippers, is parked on a road in one of the towns that surround Laguna Lake.

Link to meningo angers 'wagwag' traders

BAGUIO CITY—Government doctors have quashed a medical theory being foisted by a University of the Philippines biologist that "wagwag" shops are the source of meningococcemia contamination in the city, Mayor Braulio Yaranon said here on Thursday.

"Wagwag," the local term for imported second-hand clothes that are widely sold in downtown Baguio, was identified as "ground zero" for the disease by Pedro Alviola III, an associate professor in animal biology at the UP Los Baños.

"He (Alviola) is entitled to his own opinion," Yaranon said.

He said the city government would rely on the medical bulletins issued by government doctors that the bacteria could not thrive in inorganic material. Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit disowned reports that meningococcemia could be transmitted through wagwag in December 2004.

But the city government is concerned that new sectors have now become targets of the widening meningococcemia paranoia that has sparked discrimination against Baguio residents.

Government information officers said rumors also point to the city's black students as meningococcemia transmitters because text and e-mailed messages claim that meningococcemia originated from Africa.

Medical journal reports refer to a pattern of meningococcemia outbreaks in African, Asian and Middle East countries, but these reports rarely refer to Africa as the disease's chief source.

Antonio Prieto, regional director of the Bureau of Immigration, said Baguio hosts 32 students from Sudan, three students from Nigeria, two students from Eritrea, and one student each from Cameron and Somalia.

Ramon Dacawi, city information officer, said the meningococcemia information campaign would try to stop all forms of racial or economic discrimination.

"There is no [call] for finger pointing, because [government epidemiologists] say 30 percent of humans are carriers of [the Neisseria meningitidis bacteria]," Yaranon said.

No foreign students or foreign immigrants have been afflicted with meningococcemia since its outbreak last year.

But these days, foreign students stand out in Baguio streets because they are the only ones observed wearing surgical masks or even high-grade gas masks.

A Korean student said they were advised to protect themselves using the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) protocols. SARS hit Asian countries in 2003 and 2004.

Prieto said immigration officials had not imposed these restrictions, but local schools might have encouraged their foreign students to take extra precautions.

Baguio's foreign student population is dominated today by Koreans who enroll in language schools.

Yaranon also discounted reports that wagwag shops might be quarantined to test Aviola's theory.

Aviola claimed that bacterial spores are known to adhere to wool or synthetic materials. Wool is the fabric of fashionable bargain clothes, which wagwag houses here import from Hong Kong. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Meningo seen cause of death of Leyte baby

TACLOBAN CITY—A year-old girl from the Leyte town of Pastrana who died Tuesday night was suspected to have died of meningococcemia.

Dr. Nicholas Bautista, chief epidemiologist of the Department of Health in Eastern Visayas (DOH-8), said based on information he received from Dr. Daryl Molina, municipal health officer of Pastrana, the baby girl's case was described as "clinically meningococcemia" as she had shown symptoms of the disease.

"According to (Molina), the baby developed fever, body rashes and meningitis which were some of the manifestations of meningococcemia," Bautista said.

The baby developed high fever on Wednesday and was rushed to the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC) where she was declared dead on arrival.

Pastrana is about 28 km from Tacloban City.

The baby's family lives in Barangay Quindapondan, about a kilometer away from Pastrana.

Bautista said the child was immediately buried at the town's cemetery early yesterday.

Bautista said a team from the regional health office was now in Pastrana to investigate and determine if the baby was a victim of meningococcemia. *Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Thousands of Muslims gather in Cotabato for 'Eid'l Adha'

COTABATO CITY—Thousands of Muslims here trooped to the Cotabato City Central Pilot School grounds for an hour-long prayer service celebrating the Eid'l Adha.

Eid'l Adha is the culmination of the pilgrimage to Mecca, which is the fifth pillar of Islam.

Ustadz Jaafar Ali, head of the city's Islamic preachers, said the prayers for the safety of those who perform the "uquf" (stoning in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, to drive away evil), also highlighted Thursday's celebration.

Two pilgrims, both from Lanao provinces, were reported killed while performing the annual hajj. They died due to sickness, said the Office of Muslim Affairs.

All Muslim pilgrims, estimated at three million this year, are now in the plains of Arafat in the suburb of Mecca to offer prayers in congregation.

While they are standing (uquf) in Arafat, the other Muslims in other countries also offer congregation prayers in their respective places, a universal act among Muslims that reminds them of the forthcoming Day of Judgment, when everybody will stand as a humble slave before the majestic presence of Allah.

On Feb. 11, 2003, hundreds of Moro Islamic Liberation Front members gathered at Buliok complex in the borders of Maguindanao and North Cotabato when the government launched offensives that triggered another Army-MILF fighting and displaced some 80,000 civilians.

"We were gathered in congregational prayers including then MILF chairman Salamat Hashim who was delivering the sermon during this very important holy day when suddenly the government troops attacked the Islamic Center," recalled MILF chair Murad Ebrahim.

In a statement, he urged the Muslim Ummah to continue the sacrifice in the name of Islam.

"There is no better sacrifice," he stressed, "than holding fast to the rope of Islam despite all trials and adversities in defending the people against all forms of oppression." *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Lipa school sets general reunion

A NEW Marian statue will be blessed to highlight the 45th anniversary of Our Lady of the Rosary Academy Class '60, host of the OLRA Alumni Association general reunion on Saturday, Jan. 22, at the former OLRA school grounds in Lipa City.

Mass will be celebrated by Msgr. Alfredo A. Madlangbayan, P.A., before the celebration.

The world-class Philippine Children's Choir from Mandaluyong with founding music director, Baste L. Trinidad, will sing during the Mass.

PBL Commissioner Chino L. Trinidad will emcee the entertainment program.

For details, please call Cory D. Falcon 362-4820 or Marilyn P. Benedicto 887-1642.

WHO list shows more meningo cases outside Baguio City

BAGUIO CITY—The meningococcemia scare here is becoming a misnomer as the latest World Health Organization's figures show there are now more cases in Cordillera provinces outside Baguio than in the city itself.

A WHO bulletin released on Jan. 19 showed that there were 40 cases of meningococcal disease from the Cordillera, excluding Baguio, with 12 deaths or a mortality rate of 30 percent.

WHO said there were 38 cases in Baguio from October 2004 to Jan. 16, but with a higher fatality of 18 or a mortality rate of 48 percent.

For the Cordillera, this does not include a new case in Itogon, Benguet. Dr. Luningning Villa, spokesperson of the meningococcemia operation center, maintained by the Department of Health and the city epidemiological and surveillance unit, said the patient is a 30-year-old woman who developed fever and hemorrhagic rash on Jan. 16.

The woman also had headache and was vomiting. She was admitted to the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center on Jan. 18.

"She is now recovering at the hospital," Villa said. She said the patient's condition was confirmed by laboratory findings.

Dr. Antonio Bautista, medical officer of the DOH Cordillera, said they were still investigating if the case was related to last week's case, a 21-year-old man also from Itogon.

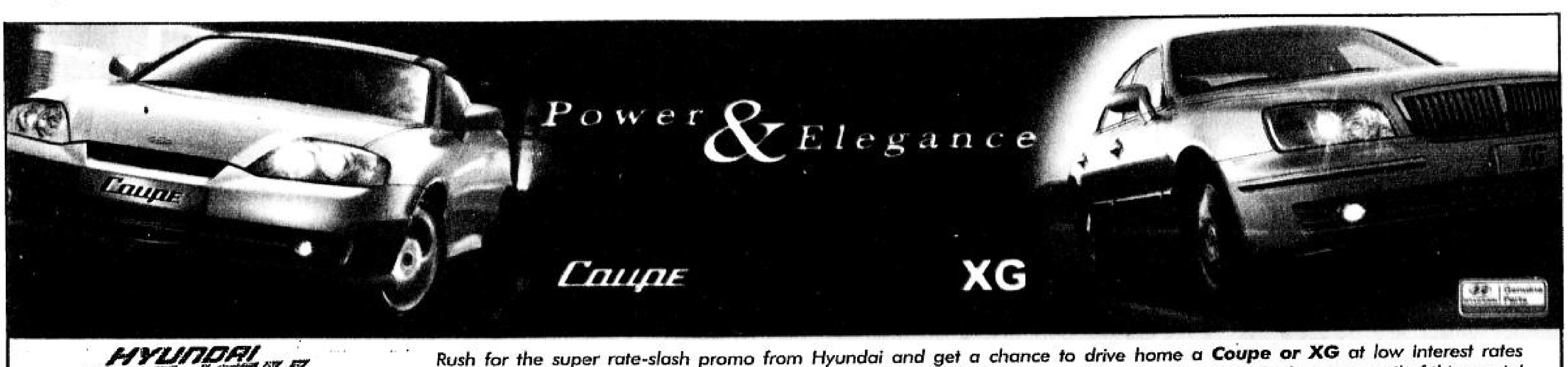
Of the previous 78 cases, 11 had been confirmed by laboratory findings, WHO said, adding that since Jan. 7, the number of weekly cases had decreased.

This year, Benguet has 23 suspected cases with four confirmed cases by laboratory findings while Mt. Province has 12 suspected cases with no confirmed case.

Bautista, who led an epidemiological team to Mt. Province, said they would do laboratory tests this week.

Baguio has 11 suspected cases and three confirmed cases in January.

The WHO team of experts, together with the assistance of partners in the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, arrived in Baguio early this month to strengthen epidemiological surveillance, improve detection and confirmation of meningococcal disease and implement further related studies. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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'Freedom here and abroad for world peace'

From page A1

THE BUSHES, 146 of them, roamed around the White House and were given a tour through the West Wing by President Bush himself before this family portrait was taken in the East Room. AP

American deaths in Iraq. There are also worries about Social Security's future and stress over the price tag of medical care and a slow job market.

"With the campaign behind us, Americans lift up our sights to the years ahead and to the great goals we will achieve for our country. I am eager and ready for the work ahead."

More than a half million people gathered in the snowy capital in near-freezing temperatures for the swearing in at the West Front of the Capitol and the traditional parade down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House.

Pennsylvania Avenue had been turned into a canyon of bleachers for the inaugural parade. Manhole covers were welded shut and traffic was blocked from 100 blocks of city streets near inaugural events. Across the city, concrete barriers and steel security fences restricted pedestrians. Security officials using high-tech monitors kept watch on key sites.

Snipers were dispatched to rooftops and bomb-sniffing dogs into the streets. Miles of metal barricades gave a fortress-like feel to the city.

Worship service

Bush began Inauguration Day at a worship service at St. John's Episcopal Church near the White House. At noon (1700 GMT), he placed his hand on the family Bible and recited the 35-word oath of office to formally become the 16th second-term US president—a sequel to four turbulent years marked by the nation's worst terrorist attack, a US-led invasion of Afghanistan and a war on Iraq that has claimed the lives of more than 1,300 Americans.

On hand to witness the event were Bush's father, the former President George H. W. Bush, and his mother, Barbara Bush, along with a host of distinguished guests that included former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton and their wives.

41 and 43

"The pride we feel this week is the same pride every parent feels when they see their son hit a home run or their daughter come home with straight A's," the former President Bush, who lost a bid for reelection in 1992, said Wednesday.

The two George Bushes—who playfully call each other "41" and "43" in honor of their place in the lineup of US presidents—are only the second father-son presidential team. They follow John Adams and John Quincy Adams, who each served one term.

The younger Bush, 58, began his new term with the lowest approval rating at that point of any recent two-term president—49 percent in an Associated Press poll this month. Iraq is the dominant concern of Americans, and Bush is the first US president to be inaugurated in wartime since Richard Nixon in 1973.

Bush's inaugural address had gone through 21 drafts as of Wednesday afternoon and was timed at 17 minutes. The address was designed to be inspirational, leaving new initiatives to be spelled out in the President's State of the Union speech on Feb. 2.

On the eve of his inauguration, Bush and First Lady Laura Bush dashed around the city from one party to another. Some revelers partied into the night, but Bush—never a fan of formal affairs—was back at the White House about 45 minutes ahead of schedule.

Bush-bashing

Not everybody cheered four more years of Bush.

Some anti-Bushites took vacations to get away from the inaugural hoopla while others flocked to Washington to give the President a symbolic snub. They planned to turn their backs on the President as his motorcade rolls down Pennsylvania Avenue.

"There are a lot of different reasons why people are participating in this action," said Jet Heiko, national organizer for the volunteer group that calls itself Turn Your Back on Bush. "Mostly it's a lot of people who feel that George Bush has turned his back on them for a variety of reasons—Iraq, health care, Social Security, educational reform issues."

Across Europe, a land none too friendly to George W. Bush, locals and American expatriates united in their opposition to the US President marked his inauguration with some unabashed Bush-bashing.

The Austria chapter of Democrats Abroad, which scrapped plans for a black-tie "un-augural ball" because of the tsunami in southern Asia, said its members instead would gather at a traditional Vienna wine bar "to scheme, plot and plan the retaking of our country."

In Britain, anti-Bush demonstrators planned a candlelight protest outside the US Embassy in central London, staged by the Stop the War Coalition which organized mass rallies opposing the Iraq conflict in 2003.

'Price of loyalty'

Rather than watch the Washington inauguration on television, the UK contingent of Democrats Abroad organized a talk by liberal author Ron Suskind, whose book "The Price of Loyalty"—an insider account of Paul O'Neill's time as US treasury secretary—paints an unflattering portrait of Bush.

NO TO
FOUR MORE
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LEAGUE OF FILIPINO STUDENTS
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I WANT
JOIN THE U.S.

POCKETS of protesters march through T.M. Kalaw Avenue in Ermita but there was no way they could make it to the US Embassy, their intended destination. ERIK ARAZAS

2nd term priorities

Bush's reelection was widely seen as a negative for global peace and security in 16 of 21 countries polled in a BBC World Service survey released on the eve of the inauguration. On average across all the countries, 58 percent called his reelection a negative development; only 26 percent described it as positive.

Bush has said his second term priorities include thwarting terrorist cells, spreading freedom and democracy—especially in the Middle East—enacting changes in the tax code and in medical liability law, and overhauling Social Security with private investment accounts.

Throughout his reelection campaign, Bush promoted what he called an "ownership society" in which Americans would have greater control over their lives.

The inauguration, a ritual performed every four years for more than 200 years, comes at a time that Vice President Dick Cheney described as one of "great consequence" for our nation.

Not in fear

"Since 2001, America has lived with adversity and sometimes with sorrow, and often with uncertainty, yet we have refused to live in fear or be intimidated by the task before us," Cheney said, introducing the President at an outdoor event at Ellipse Park amid a week of presidential pageantry. *AP*

US inauguration firsts

LONDON—U.S. President George W. Bush takes the oath of office on Thursday in the 55th inaugural ceremony with a history stretching back over 200 years. Since 1937, Jan. 20 has been Inauguration Day. Previously, March 4 was the date set for the ceremony.

Here are a few facts about previous American inaugurations:

1789: George Washington, a 57-year-old general from the American Revolution, is sworn in as the United States first president in New York. Four years later he gives the shortest inauguration speech, at just 135 words, following reelection. The 1793 ceremony took place in Philadelphia which was to play host until 1801.

1801: Thomas Jefferson takes the oath of office in the new capital of Washington D.C.

1817: James Monroe is inaugurated at a temporary Capitol building as the invading British had burned the old one and the White House in 1814.

1841: William Harrison delivers a 8,200-word oration -- the longest address -- in snowy conditions, catches pneumonia and dies exactly a month later. He was the first to die in office.

1845: First inauguration to be covered by telegraph and the first known newspaper illustration of the event as James Polk takes office.

1849: James Polk's term ends on March 3 but incoming President Zachary Taylor refuses to take the oath on a Sunday due to his religious beliefs. David Rice Achison, the presidential pro-tem of the Senate, becomes President for just one day.

1857: The first inauguration to be photographed (James Buchanan)

1897: The first to be recorded by movie cameras (William McKinley)

1901: Theodore Roosevelt became the youngest president at 42, taking his oath in a private home in Buffalo, New York, after William McKinley is assassinated.

1925: First inauguration broadcast nationally on radio.

1937: First Jan. 20 inauguration due to change made by 20th Amendment to the Constitution as Franklin D. Roosevelt takes office for second time.

1945: Roosevelt becomes the only four-term President, due to continuing World War II.

1949: Harry S. Truman takes office in first televised ceremony.

1961: John F. Kennedy ceremony televised in color.

1963: Lyndon B. Johnson takes the oath of office aboard Air Force One in Dallas, Texas, following Kennedy's Nov. 22 assassination.

1981: Ronald Reagan, with a desire to face toward his home state of California, breaks with many years of tradition by being sworn in at the Capitol's west side instead of the East Portico.

1997: Bill Clinton's inauguration is the first to be broadcast live on the Internet.

REUTERS

Susan links up with Poe's 3 children

From page A1

at the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City.

Roces was expected to visit her husband's tomb at the North Cemetery, also in Quezon City, according to Rez Cortez, chair of the National Council of Concerned Volunteers (NCCV) for FPJ.

Schedule

On Saturday, Cortez said a special Mass will be held in 390 churches nationwide in commemoration of the last day of the traditional 40 days of mourning. The day's activities would kick off with a flower offering at the actor's tomb in the North Cemetery at 6 a.m,

In the afternoon, FPJ Volunteer Groups will gather for the blessing of their idol's tomb followed by a procession to the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City for a concelebrated Mass by Fr. Larry Faraon at 7 p.m.

Cortez said the procession will start at the North Cemetery, then proceed to A. Bonifacio, San Francisco del Monte, Araneta Avenue and finally to Quezon Avenue, where the Sto. Domingo Church is located.

Keeping her distance

"Susan wants to keep her distance from partisan politics, but she will stay close to the FPJ volunteers," Cortez said.

Roces has already filed a petition to substitute for her husband in his electoral protest against President Macapagal-Arroyo alleging he had been cheated in the presidential elections last May. Roces has maintained, however, that she would not be getting into politics.

'Light and guide'

But the NCCV would continue with its objective of collecting at least three million signatures to convince Roces to be Poe's followers' "light and guide."

As of yesterday, Cortez said the NCCV had collected more than 100,000 signatures from the National Capital Region alone. He said the signature drive was also going around the provinces.

Cortez said the results of the signature drive would be "presented" to Roces on Feb. 14.

"We are not pressuring her to lead us. We only want her to be our light and guide," Cortez said.

Also, Cortez said, the NCCV would like to give Roces time to be with her family.

Mothers unidentified

Like most of Poe's friends in show business, the INQUIRER source, who asked not to be named, also refused to identify the mothers of Michael Jordan, who is already in his 40s, or that of Lovey, who is only 15 years old.

The source, however, said their mothers were also from show biz, like starlet Ana Marin, who is the mother of Poe's 21-year old son, Ronian.

During the campaign for the presidential elections, Poe, who had been dubbed the undisputed King of Philippine Movies, admitted he had a son by starlet Marin, but he did not mention his two other children. Poe and Roces have one daughter, Mary Grace.

The source said Poe's children learned only about each other after Roces had them called to St. Luke's Hospital where Poe was confined after suffering a massive stroke. Poe died on Dec. 14 and was buried on Dec. 22.

Touring FPJ studio

Guiding Poe's children through a tour of the FPJ Studios after the funeral, Roces was overheard telling them: "Feel free to come here anytime. This studio belongs to your father."

GRIEVING widow Susan Roces feels for the pain of her husband's children with amazing grace. REUTERS

If all else fails, smile to break Guinness record

From page A1

uled for unveiling next week on the northbound side of Edsa in Mandaluyong City.

The mosaic—to be mounted on a five-story-high steel billboard—is an attempt to break the record set by a group of students in London and earn for the Philippines another slot in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Organizers are convinced that they have in fact smashed that 2-year-old record, which has only 15,500 smiling faces individually mounted by hand on one huge gallery.

It's just a matter of time before the local feat is made official, said project director Ed Dames.

At least 200,000 pictures have been received for the "monument of pleasant faces" since toothpaste company Close-Up launched the project in October. And more pictures are still being sent.

Too bad only 36,000 can be squeezed into 60 frames of the 90x150-foot billboard expected to be the biggest in the country, said Jane Butchayo, who is in charge of promotions.

There's a P1-million cash prize for the winning smile to be drawn in an upcoming raffle.

But Dames says the deluge of entries is not about money.

"People want to be part of a monument of pleasant faces that we're trying to build here," he told the INQUIRER. "Never mind the Olympic fiasco, the conflicts in politics, the problems with the economy. This is a smiling country, anyway."

Part of history

In essence, the gallery means to show that come what may, Filipinos will always be smiling.

One e-mail attached to an entry from the Visayas pretty much illustrated the general excitement: "Please include my face, I want to be part of history."

It's probably for this same reason that even the likes of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Sen. Juan Flavier, young show biz personality Jolina Magdangal and bowling champion Paeng Nepomuceno, himself a Guinness record-holder, joined the effort.

The President got in courtesy of her daughter Luli, who sent a picture of the two of them taken one candid moment at the beach. Bereft of makeup, mother and daughter looked like sisters.

There's also an entry from a toothless and beaming Efren "Bata" Reyes, the billiards legend.

Who's in, who's not

Dames swears that ugly faces were not "banned," and presents as proof a picture of a brown-skinned grandfather making a face at the camera.

He's not exactly handsome, but he'll be in the gallery simply because "he's got a pleasant smile," Dames said.

Then there are the pictures of Bayani Fernando and Jejomar Binay, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority and mayor of Makati City, respectively.

Being both political personalities, the two men who are not exactly chummy are likely to find their pictures under the same category, in the same frame of the huge panel. But that's about as close as they can get, being at odds over issues from traffic to jaywalking to sidewalk vendors.

Conspicuously missing in the collection are the late Fernando Poe Jr.'s suppressed smile, Joseph Estrada's "macho" beam, and Gregorio Honasan's "politician's grin."

But the billboard has never been about pitting one personality against another, said Dames.

It's really about trying to unite Filipinos, giving them "something to smile about amid all the chaos," he said.

Still smiling

The entries came pouring in soon after Close-Up called for pleasant faces last Oct. 19, and peaked in November and December.

The storms that hit Luzon late last year destroyed houses and livelihoods but did not entirely succeed in wiping the smile off the faces of the survivors, Dames said.

On certain days, the organizers collected an average of 3,000-5,000 pictures daily, according to Butchayo.

Most of the pictures came from educational institutions like the University of Asia and the Pacific, University of San Carlos and Holy Cross of Davao College—the three schools with the biggest number of entries.

The organizers had to grapple with the problem of having to drop so many adorable entries.

Dames said they had to consider the picture's quality on top of choosing the most pleasant and most evocative smiles. Still, the final choices were 6,000 more than the 30,000 slots they had originally prepared.

You can check if yours got into the "elite" list at www.closeupplanet.com. The website will soon have a miniature version of the photo mosaic, to allow people to locate their faces in the huge billboard.

Echegaray's widow dies but hospital keeping body

From page A1

THE ECHEGARAYS, Leo and Zenaida, pose for a wedding photo on Dec. 22, 1998 while Leo was on death row. He made history as the first convict in 22 years to die following the reimposition of the death penalty.

At a time when wealthy convicts are trying to get an executive pardon for purported humanitarian reasons, Leo Echegaray's widow, Zenaida Javier Echegaray, left behind a family so hard-up it has yet to claim her remains because of unpaid hospital bills. She was 44.

"Our concern at this time is how we can take our mother's remains home very soon," said Encarnacion Alcuaz, 27, Zenaida's daughter from a previous relationship.

She said her mother's body was being preserved merely with formalin because the morgue of the Pasig City General Hospital was not equipped with a freezer.

Alcuaz said that when she last checked her mother's hospital account on Friday last week, the bill was almost P37,000.

"She told us she wanted to live for us. She said she was going to fight and survive," Alcuaz said, recalling her mother's last words before going under the knife on Jan. 11.

Zenaida lapsed into a coma three days after surgery. She breathed her last on Jan. 19.

Pen pals

Leo Echegaray and Zenaida Javier were pen pals. They first met when he was doing time behind bars following his conviction by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court for raping his own daughter, a minor at the time of the crime.

They would marry despite Leo's being first in line for execution on death row.

The outspoken Zenaida would join groups campaigning for the repeal of the death penalty law while Leo awaited his execution date.

Zenaida would stay with her husband until the last moment they were allowed together at the maximum security compound of the New Bilibid Prisons.

After Leo's execution on Feb. 9, 1999, Zenaida took on various odd jobs and small businesses such as selling shoes and bags for a direct marketing firm.

But her family's financial state at the time of her death indicates that her attempts at making her loved ones' lives better were futile.

Alcuaz said that she had yet to find a job and that her younger sister Cristina, 18, had stopped going to school.

"When I told my mother that she would see [Leo] soon, she cried," Alcuaz recalled.

Those who want to help Zenaida Echegaray's family settle her hospital bills may call 0919-3373849.

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Pasig City mayor okays acid plant's reopening

By Luige A. del Puerto

MONEY matters prompted Pasig City Mayor Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio to change his mind and allow the reopening of a chemical plant that was shut down for allegedly leaking toxic fumes in the city.

According to Eusebio, he realized that the continued closure of the sulfuric acid plant of LMG Chemicals Inc. could have bigger economic implications.

He said, "The plant supplies (raw materials to) many other companies."

The sulfuric acid produced by the plant is reportedly used in the manufacture of soap and as a component of batteries.

Also, the mayor said officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had assured him that the plant operators had complied with the necessary safety standards.

However, Eusebio lifted the closure order on the acid plant only after LMG deposited P500,000 with the city treasurer's office as a form of environmental guarantee fund.

"The money shall be used in case anything (untoward) happens," he told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Just a few days ago, a fuming Eusebio said he would never allow the plant to reopen after the DENR temporarily lifted the cease and desist order the agency issued against it last year.

Environment officials ordered the closure of the acid plant after a gas leak in September 2004 downed 25 students at the nearby San Joaquin Elementary School.

In August 2001, a gas leak also occurred and killed an elderly woman while sickening 30 other people.

In issuing the temporary lifting order, the DENR is giving LMG 30 days to test safety devices and an environmental control and monitoring system recently installed at the plant.

Yesterday, LMG general manager Jose Fernandez confirmed that the city has lifted the cease and desist order.

He said the plant would start heating up their equipment in the next three to four days. Only then would actual production of sulfuric acid take place.

The plant employs around 150 people, and gives around P1 million annually to the city's coffers.

Eusebio said a committee was formed to monitor the plant's operations.

After 30 days, the committee would recommend if it could continue operating or if it should be totally shut down.

But while he allowed the plant to operate again, Eusebio said he told LMG to start looking for a place to transfer the plant. *With a report from Belle V. Bondoc*

Grenade, bullets fished out of creek

By Leila B. Salaverria

WORKERS de-clogging a canal at the Islamic Center in Quiapo, Manila, fished out yesterday a plastic bag containing a grenade and ammunition.

The fragmentation grenade still had its pin intact when found inside a black, sealed plastic bag, which also contained two empty long M-16 magazines, several live .45 caliber and M-16 rifle bullets and a fan knife.

Palanca precinct operative Roberto Soque said the bag was found at 1:30 p.m. by Edilberto Navarro, who was part of a team de-clogging the canal on Kalimudan Street near the mosque at the Islamic Center.

Workers tried to feel the contents of the bag and immediately called the police after sensing what felt like a grenade.

Earlier, the Islamic community protested the arrest of Muslims inside the Islamic Information Center along Taft Avenue during a raid on Jan. 7.

Police found three improvised explosive devices and ammunition at the center.

Two of those arrested, Afgani Alonto and Leonardo Ricalde, were charged with illegal possession of explosives and ammunition after the incident.

They claimed that the bombs were planted.

Briton offers P5M for missing wife

By Leila B. Salaverria

A BRITISH lawyer has sought the help of the police and is offering a P5 million reward for information about his missing wife, who was abducted in Olongapo City in November last year.

Lawyer David Bateson flew in from Hong Kong, where he is based, and met with Director Avelino Razon of the National Capital Region Police Office to seek his help in locating his wife, Violeta.

In a statement, Razon said the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force and the Presidential Anti-Crime Emergency Response were already on the case and had started looking for Violeta Bateson, 42, who owned the Violet Hotel on Magsaysay Drive in Olongapo City.

According to Bateson, Violeta went missing on Nov. 29, 2004 and an initial police investigation showed that some casino players in debt with the woman could be involved in her disappearance.

Bateson expressed hope that the P5 million reward would encourage witnesses to come out so that Violeta could immediately be located, safe and sound.

The lawyer and the hotel owner have a 10-year-old daughter, Sara, who is studying in Thailand and is worried about her mother.

MISSING PERSON
VIOLETA BATESON
"AKA LETLET"
"SUPER LOLET"

BRITISH lawyer David Bateson holds up a picture of his wife, Violeta, in this picture released by the NCRPO.

QC tops dangerous roads list

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FOR THE second year in a row, Quezon City topped the list of accident-prone localities in Metro Manila.

According to a study by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), 1,824 of the 5,237 fatal and non-fatal accidents in 2004 happened in Quezon City.

Pasig City followed with 709, and Marikina City with 692 of total road incidents last year.

Caloocan City was fourth in the list with 366 accidents, and Makati was fifth with 335.

MMDA-Road Safety Unit chief Max Tapongot attributed the high incidence of accidents in these cities to their big land areas and wide roads.

"These LGUs are also considered central business districts (CBDs) with busy shopping centers and malls where people frequent," Tapongot said.

2003 study

In a similar study for 2003, the MMDA-RSU listed Quezon City, Pasig, Makati and Caloocan as the most accident-prone cities in the metropolis.

Th MMDA-RSU report for 2004 also identified the accident-prone sites in Metro Manila.

In Quezon City, the most dangerous roads were identified as Quirino Highway, and the intersections of Regalado Avenue and Mindanao Avenue Extension, and Edsa-Munoz.

Along Quirino Highway, danger areas were at the intersections of Gen. Luis Street, Villaflor Street, Seminary Road, Zabarte Road and Regalado Avenue.

Commonwealth Avenue, which headed last year's list, was notably absent from Quezon City's accident-prone sites.

Tapongot said the rate of accidents and pedestrian deaths in the road decreased by as much as 30 to 40 percent in 2004.

Footbridges help

"This could be attributed to the installation of more footbridges and pedestrian barriers in Commonwealth Avenue," Tapongot explained.

In Pasig, the accident-prone areas were Julia Vargas Avenue at the intersections of Lanuza Avenue and Meralco Avenue; at the corner of Lanuza Avenue and Ortigas; at the intersection of Ortigas Avenue and Green Meadows; at the intersection of Edsa and Shaw Boulevard; and at the corner of Santolan Road and Ortigas Avenue.

The report said that the most accident-prone area in Marikina City was A. Bonifacio Avenue at the Riverbanks area, while the most dangerous places in Caloocan City were at the corners of Rizal Avenue Extension and 2nd Avenue, and C-3 Road-Boni Serrano Street.

Makati's accident-prone areas were identified as the Edsa-Ayala intersection and at the corner of Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue and South Superhighway.

Caloocan backtracks on fee hike

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE CALOOCAN City government has lowered the rates for most of its permit fees after complaints about the sharp increase in rates flooded City Hall over the past two weeks.

Enacting Ordinance No. 0388, the City Council amended an earlier ordinance (Ordinance No. 0386) which revised the City Revenue Code and sharply increased permit and certification fees.

Ordinance 0388 would allow businessmen who have already paid their fees to get back excess payments through a tax refund.

At the same time, the city government extended the deadline for the renewal of business permits and payment of taxes, which should have ended yesterday.

The deadline has been extended up to the end of the month.

In December, the city government raised permit and certification fees, hoping to increase city revenues.

Under the original revision (CO No. 0386), the annual sanitary permit and inspection fee for night clubs, bars, beer houses, music lounges and similar establishments was made P10,000.

But under the latest adjustment (CO No. 0388), the fee was brought down to just P5,000.

The latest adjustment also lowered the sanitary and permit annual fee for hospitals and medical institutions from P10,000 to P8,000.

Some rates did not change, however.

METROBRIEFS

Vintage bomb kills man, hurts boy

A 41-YEAR-OLD man died, while his son was critically wounded after he tried to pry open a World War II bomb yesterday afternoon in Antipolo City, police said. Marcial Salvador, died on the spot after the bomb exploded in Sitio Culasisi, Barangay San Luis. His young son was rushed to a local hospital with face injuries. *Luige del Puerto*

Las Piñas opens ward for residents

LAS PIÑAS City Mayor Imelda T. Aguilar and former Mayor Vergel Aguilar opened have opened a 20-bed ward for residents at a local hospital. Named the Vergel A. Aguilar Ward, it will cater free of charge to residents who are holders of the city's health card or green card.

Raps filed against German's abductors

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice filed charges yesterday against the suspects in the abduction of a Filipino-German woman and her Filipino boyfriend in Muntinlupa City. Prosecutors found probable cause to indict the 13 men and two women in the Jan. 11 kidnapping of Katrina Schoof, 20, and her boyfriend Jeffery Cruz, 26. The suspects now detained in Camp Crame are Mary Rose Cabal, Rodolfo Laurio, Ronnie Candidato, Alex Esquilona, Michael Baldemoro, Alvin and Antonio Monroy, Jerome Palana, Ronnie Ramos and SPO1 Alvin Velasquez, who is believed to be the leader of the group. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Driver dies in QC rob attempt

A FAMILY driver was killed, while a housemaid and a bystander were injured in what police believe to be a robbery try in Quezon City the other night. Danilo Allado, 34, died of two gunshot wounds, while housemaid Lulu Cabiling, 24, was injured when three suspects opened fire at the white Toyota Corolla they were in, police said. Student George Caparas, 23, was also accidentally hit when a responding policeman shot it out with the three alleged robbers. Police said the incident happened at about 6:30 p.m. Thursday along Zabarte Road in Barangay Kaligayahan. Allado, Cabiling and their employer were on their way home when three men on a motorcycle blocked their path. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Dementia Society marks 3rd year

THE DEMENTIA Society of the Philippines and its Allied Specialists Group will celebrate its 3rd anniversary with a scientific forum on Comprehensive Care of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias on Jan. 22, Saturday, at 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Amorsolo Ballroom, 4th floor, Holiday Inn Hotel, Robinson's Complex, Ortigas, Pasig City. It is free to DSP members and for ASG members. A registration fee of P150 for non-members covers dinner and snacks. The theme of the forum will be "Be One of Us."

Don Bosco enters golden year

AN ALUMNI homecoming and various cultural and sports activities from Jan. 22 to Feb. 4 will cap the Golden Jubilee celebration of Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati. DBTI rector Fr. Louie Castañeda, SDB, said the homecoming would be held at 5 p.m. at the Savio Park on Jan. 22. A concert featuring Nyoy Volante and Mannos, Nina and Jimmy Bondoc is set on Jan. 29. The celebration will be hosted by Batch '80 and dubbed "Busko Pa Rin!"

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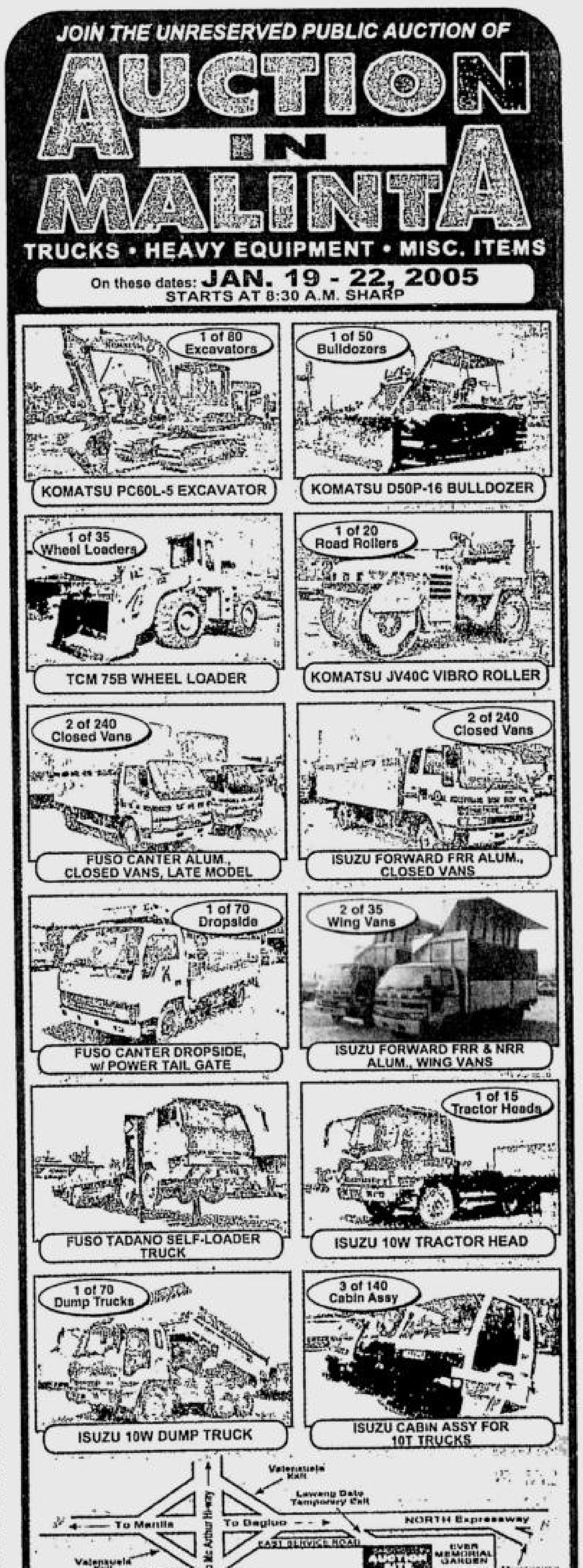
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No sacred cows in case, says Kaye lawyer

By Luige A. del Puerto

LET THE axe fall where it may.

That was the sentiment of former Justice Harriet Demetriou after Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that she was having reservations about new Nida Blanca case witness Ranny Francisco.

Gonzalez had said that Francisco, a former tabloid reporter, could implicate a close friend of the murdered actress in the case.

But Demetriou said she did not care whoever Francisco pointed to as a suspect as long as he was telling the truth.

She added that she only wanted to hear Francisco's story before she issued any comments about him.

"The word is not reservation. How can I judge his credibility when I have not even talked to him?" the lawyer said. "I just want to be absolutely sure. I did this with (Andrada) Dalandas and (Fedelyn) Mariz (Canonio)."

In his earlier statements, Gonzales said he would not allow anyone to cast doubts on Francisco because of "biases or (the intention) to protect others."

On Wednesday, Demetriou met with Francisco for more than three hours at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) office in Manila.

Reached by the INQUIRER after the meeting, Demetriou said she was not finished assessing the new witness.

She said she wanted to be very thorough with Francisco, just as she was with the other witnesses.

The lawyer disclosed that she would have to first validate the people and events that Francisco mentioned in his narration.

"It's the normal process of knowing (whether what he is saying is true or not)," she explained.

Demetriou—who as a regional trial court judge became known for convicting Calauan, Laguna, Mayor Antonio Sanchez for rape—reiterated that there should be no sacred cows in the investigation of the case.

"Kaye Torres and I are not shielding anybody... There should be no sacred cows in the investigation," she told the INQUIRER.

Demetriou said the secretary might have misconstrued her intentions.

"(Maybe) the secretary has a misimpression of what I said. I just want to be given the opportunity to make my own assessment on the credibility of Francisco," she said.

She explained that as Torres's counsel, she was entitled to an assessment independent of those of the NBI and the justice department.

Demetriou also said that she was asking the DOJ to investigate the links of former military spy chief Galileo Kintanar to witnesses and suspects, particularly Philip Medel, because he knew them.

"He should be investigated in the light of Anji (Dalandas's) testimony, which places Medel at the crime scene," said the lawyer, who also served as an associate justice of the Sandiganbayan.

"What I'm saying is that the NBI should also ask him because he knew these people. He should be asked to shed light on his relationship with them," she added.

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No touching SEAG sked—Peping

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ALL 41 sports and 388 events approved last year by the Southeast Asian Games Federation for the 2005 SEAG slated in Metro Manila and three other venues this November will remain intact.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday said he is no longer interested in amending the SEAG schedule even as he set a meeting with Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee chair Obet Pagdanganan and members of the SEAG review committee which he formed to study that possibility.

"As much as possible, I don't want to touch anything anymore," Cojuangco told the INQUIRER. "Even the review committee didn't recommend any changes in the [SEAG] lineup anyway."

He also said it came in handy that First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo was able to raise P150 million from the country's top corporations and businessmen for the training of RP athletes seeing action in the SEA Games.

COJUANGCO PDI PHOTO

Contrary to what some national sports associations had feared, the review committee headed by athletics and chess boss Go Teng Kok didn't ask for drastic changes but merely brought up concerns over the staging of 18 sports events.

The review committee interviewed officials of baseball, muay thai, triathlon, rowing, sepak takraw, pencak silat, traditional boat race, volleyball, weightlifting, body building, table tennis, squash, badminton, lawn tennis, sailing, canoe-kayak, petanque and lawn bowls to discuss their winning chances in the Games.

After a collective haul of only five gold medals in the last SEAG, the officials of the 18 sports disciplines vowed to win at least 27 golds overall this time. In all, 99 golds are at stake in these sports.

During the POC executive council meeting last Wednesday, Cojuangco also announced the appointment of Go as "special assistant to the president." Go will serve as Cojuangco's "trouble shooter" in the spirit of a united POC.

"I want to remove from their (NSAs) minds that this is a one-man job," said Cojuangco. "I need all the help they can give. And we need this kind of unity in the POC in order to succeed."

Also present at the meeting were chair Robert Aventajado, first vice president Rep. Monico Puentevella, second VP Rey Jaylo and secretary general Steve Hontiveros.

Cojuangco, who is also the vice chair of the Philsoc, said the SEAG organizers are holding a general meeting next week to assess the status of their preparation.

He added that Vietnam has offered equipment used during the 2003 SEAG.

More food, higher pay for RP athletes

GOOD news to national athletes and coaches.

The Philippine Sports Commission yesterday increased their meal allowance and promised to look into the possibility of also raising their monthly stipend.

PSC officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez added the athletes will be provided with a fresh set of playing gear from adidas from track suits, shirts and shoes and new beddings at their quarters at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

From P250, each national athlete will soon get P350 daily according to Ramirez, who appeared before mediamen along with commissioners Michael Barredo, Leon Montemayor and Ambrosio de Luna.

He said the agency is also studying how to raise the monthly allowances of Class A and Class B athletes, who are getting P8,000 and P6,000, respectively.

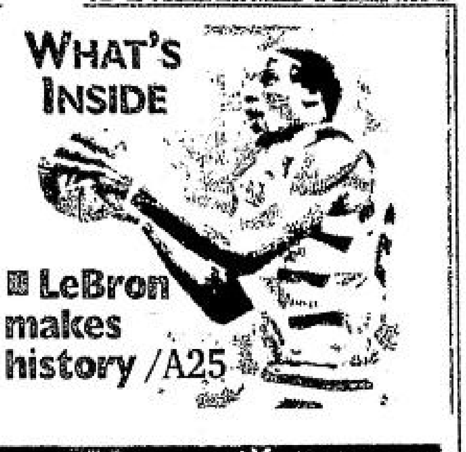
Ramirez also announced that the PSC has recommended the transfer of the Palarong Pambansa to the Department of Education.

The transfer, according to Ramirez, needs an Executive Order from President Macapagal-Arroyo but will include the funds the PSC used to get from the National Sports Development Fund worth about P40 million.

"We want the PSC to concentrate on policy making and taking care of the national sports associations and athletes," said Ramirez.

Ramirez added there won't be any massive revamp and stressed that he won't fire any of the 350 contractual employees, but instead find opportunities for them to be productive. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

WHAT'S INSIDE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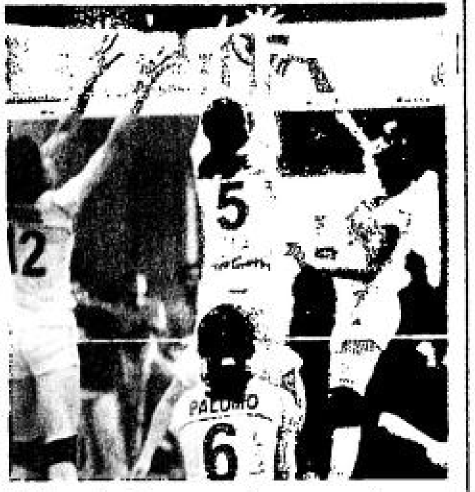

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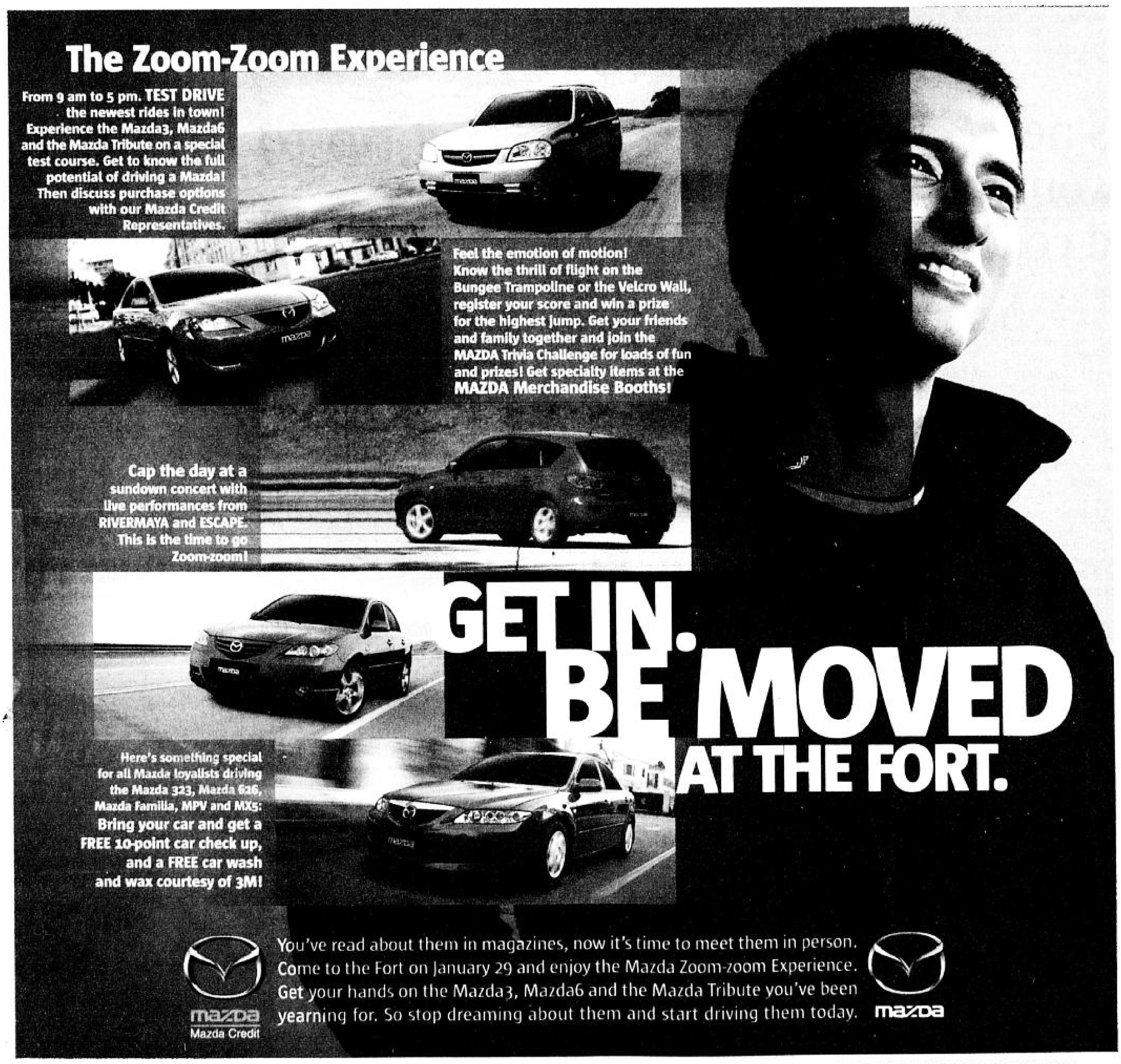
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Kings, Beermen rivalry intensify in semifinals

THE BATTLE lines have been drawn.

As far as the Barangay Ginebra Kings are concerned, this is their conference, regardless of the loss that put them a game down in the best-of-five semifinals series in the PBA Gran Matador Philippine Cup. San Miguel, getting a glimpse of what it means to fight the league's most popular squad, refuses to accept so.

Despite being sister companies, the rivalry between the two teams is so intense, Kings guard Mark Caguioa refuses to forget the defeat handed to them by the Beermen during the 2001 All-Filipino Cup.

"Back in 2001, *sobrang* experienced *lang talaga ang* San Miguel *kaya sila ang* No. 1 team to beat," Caguioa conceded. "Personally, *gusto ko makalaban talaga ang* SMB *dahil gusto ko matikman nila iyong ginawa nila sa amin nung* 2001."

But for the spitfirish guard to complete his revenge, the Kings have to bounce back strong from Wednesday's Game One, where San Miguel, riding on the 32-point, 13-rebound performance of Danny Seigle, sent a 96-87 message to the Kings.

Even though his team is up, coach Jong Uichico has had a taste of how tough it will be playing against Ginebra, what with the crowd backing the Kings. With chants of "Ginebra!" nearly drowning out even ABC-5's analysts, the Kings proved that they have an able sixth man behind them.

The two teams clash anew with the public's favorite Gameboys going up against each other in what is expected to be a classic match.

Shooters Caguioa and Seigle are expected to renew their offensive showdown. Olsen Racela and Jayjay Helterbrand, a study of clashing quarterbacking styles, try to orchestrate their teams to victory. Big men Danny Ildefonso and Nic Belasco go up against Erik Menk and Romel Adducul in an expectedly bruising battle underneath the boards.

To silence the electrifying Ginebra crowd, San Miguel hopes to bank on the steadiness earned from experience, especially since the stakes are high.

A win will put the Beermen a win closer to a championship slot. A loss puts life back to Ginebra, something Caguioa hopes to accomplish to chase away the ghosts of 2001.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SAN MIGUEL'S Olsen Racela dribbles between Ginebra's Jayjay Helterbrand (left) and Mark Caguioa.

San Mig, Talk 'N Text seek No. 2

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
(Game 2 of best-of-five semifinals)
4:40 p.m.—Shell vs Talk 'N Text
7:30 p.m.—Ginebra vs San Miguel

SHELL is expected to recover from fatigue after a day's rest while Barangay Ginebra won't be as rusty as when it played its first game of the year last Wednesday.

Talk 'N Text and San Miguel Beer are ready for these possibilities, however, as they shoot for a commanding 2-0 lead in Game 2 of the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup semifinals today at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Phone Pals and the Turbo Chargers collide at 4:40 p.m. while the Gin Kings oppose the Beermen at 7:30 p.m.

Playing with fresh legs, the Phone Pals came down hard on the battle-weary Turbo Chargers, 101-89, while the Beermen frustrated the Gin Kings' multitude of supporters with a 96-87 win at the start of their separate best-of-five semifinal series.

"They're (Gin Kings) not in game shape and they still have to regain their timing," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico after the game Wednesday. "But Game 2 will be entirely different. The rustiness will be gone and Ginebra will surely come back and make adjustments."

On the other hand, coach Leo Austria and the Turbo Chargers were exhausted against the Phone Pals, having played three games against the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs to reach the semis.

By securing the No. 2 spot after the elimination round, the Phone Pals entered the semifinals outright and went on vacation for almost two weeks.

"I hope the 24-hour rest will be enough when we go into Game 2. It's a longer series and we could still adjust and correct our mistakes," said Austria, who has already achieved a feat by steering the Turbo Chargers in the Final Four.

Shell is in the semifinals for the first time after seven conferences or since the 2001 Governors Cup where it was swept by San Miguel Beer in a best-of-five affair.

Jimmy Alapag and Willie Miller, one of the most formidable backcourt tandems in the league, will again be a cause of concern for the Turbo Chargers.

Aside from their heroics in Game 1, Alapag and Miller were also instrumental when the Phone Pals defeated the Turbo Chargers in a playoff for the right to advance outright into the semifinals.

The burden of limiting Alapag and Miller falls on Shell's Kalani Ferreria, Chris Calaguio, Rensy Bajar, Celino Cruz and Ronald Tubid while Tony dela Cruz, Billy Mamaril and Rich Alvarez will have to contain Mark Telan, Yancy de Ocampo and Vic Pablo.

For the Gin Kings, Danny Seigle will be high on their list after the San Miguel wingman drilled in 32 points against them.

Coach Siot Tanquingcen should find somebody who could stop the shifty, 6-foot-5 Seigle or devise a defensive dragnet before he could inflict more damage.

"As it is, Barangay Ginebra is a very tough team to beat. It's like going five against six because of the crowd. They (Gin Kings) don't need help from anyone else anymore," said Uichico, hinting on bad officiating in Game 1. *June Navarro*

Celis new RP women's head coach

FORMER University of the Philippines guard Raymond Celis has been appointed head coach of the national women's basketball team to the 23rd Southeast Asian Games the country is hosting this year.

The 41-year-old Celis, son of former cager Domingo "Jun" Celis and writer-columnist Beth, takes over from long-time mentor Bai Cristobal, according to Basketball Association of the Philippines vice president Filomeno "Boy" Codiñera.

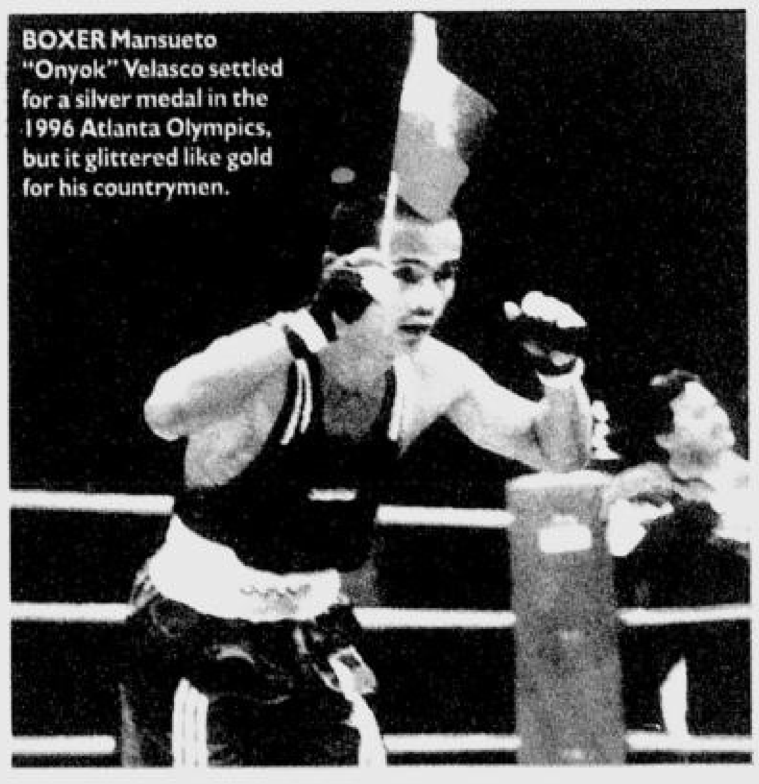
Celis, presently the head of La Salle Greenhills' basketball program, was until last year the assistant coach to Tetet Enriquez of the national girls' 18-under squad.

Celis coached Colegio de San Lorenzo in the National Capital Region Athletic Association basketball tournament for two years and was appointed by BAP secretary general Graham Lim as member of the national coaching staff for girls.

Celis acknowledged he faces a big challenge since the women's team has yet to win in the SEAG, but vowed to do his best.

Celis played five years for the UP Maroons early in the '80s with Ronnie Magsanoc and Benjie Paras among his teammates.

A business administration major in economics graduate, Celis played for ERDC, H. Lhuillier, Philips Sardines, Converse and Sarsi in the Philippine Amateur Basketball League (now the PBL). He attended coaching seminars conducted by Ed Schilling, Darryl Dawkins, Detlef Schrempf and Kenneth Hill.


BOXER Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco settled for a silver medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, but it glittered like gold for his countrymen.

Scoop to honor RP Olympic medalists

TO COMMEMORATE the Philippines' 80th year of participation in the Olympic Games, the Sports Communicators Organization of the Philippines will honor the Filipino Olympic medalists from 1924 in Paris up to last year in Athens.

The tribute to be held in coordination with the Philippine Olympians Association is scheduled during the Scoop Annual Awards Night on Feb. 24 at a place still to be decided.

The honorees are silver medalists Anthony Villanueva (1964) and Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco (1996) of boxing and bronze medalists Teofilo Ildefonso (1928 and 1932) of swimming, Simeon Toribio (1932) and Miguel White (1936) of athletics and Jose "Cely" Villanueva (1932), Leopoldo Serrantes (1986) and Roel Velasco (1992) of boxing.

Also to be recognized are the gold-medal performance of Arianne Cerdena in the demonstration sport of bowling (1986) and the bronze-medal feats of Stephen Fernandez and Bea Lucero in the exhibition event of taekwondo (1992).

Scoop president Eddie Alinea and POA head Art Macapagal said all living Olympians will also be given plaques to mark their participation in the quadrennial event dubbed as the "Greatest Show on Earth."

Meanwhile, the Scoop sa Kamayan weekly session remains suspended in view of the preparations being undertaken for the Annual Awards Night.

Tribu Sugbu, General Feeds squeak past rivals

CEBU CITY—Cebu teams Tribu Sugbu and General Feeds Megamix scored hairline victories Wednesday at the start of the NBC Panasonic pre-season basketball tournament at the Cebu Coliseum here.

Parading a new lineup, the Skygo-Sirlitz-backed Tribu Sugbu downed Forward Taguig, 80-76, after the Feedmasters had nipped the Spring Cooking Oil-supported Laguna Spring, 84-83.

Tribu Sugbu, the inaugural NBC champion, banked on ex-pro Lowell Briones, Russ Neil Paglinawan and Apple Tuadles to hold off its finals rival, Taguig.

They combined to give the Cebuanos a 79-73 lead with 15.8 ticks left in the main game of the event backed by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Molten, Nature's Spring and Cebu's JY Square Discovery mall.

Mayor Freddie Tinga's boys threatened anew at 79-76 on slotman Nathaniel Cruz's triple, but Kim Calo split his charities to finalize the count.

"I give credit to the boys. They stepped up at the right time," said Tribu coach Al Solis, who lost the core of his champion team to Granny Goose of the PBL.

The Spring of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro had a chance to save the game, but Marlon Kalaw missed a lay-up and Mike Garcia's putback rimmed out at the buzzer.

Cebu Basketball Federation MVP Ian Saladaga sparked the Feedmasters' triumph, fueling a rally that wiped out Spring's 78-68 lead in the last 5:32.

The Scores:

First Game

GEN. FEEDS 84—Magsumbol 12, Balague 11, Saladaga 9, U. Reyes 9, Sevilla 9, Ababon 8, Elim 7, Bucao 4, Mapana 3, Cjar 2, Rodriguez 0, Caingiet 0, Celis 0

LAGUNA 83—Manuel 17, M. Reyes 16, Crobin 13, Caceres 10, Alminario 9, Proceso 6, Kalaw 5, Garcia 4, Roda 2, Tolentino 1, Santos 0, Vivero 0, Lingal 0, Dalino 0

Quarters: 17-24, 47-46, 68-61, 84-83

Second Game

TRIBU SUGBU 80—Mercado 14, Briones 13, Sampilo 13, Guerrero 12, Paglinawan 10, Akad 6, Tuadles 4, Beramo 2, Cabanes 2, Abellong 2, Calo 2, Arda 0, Espelat 0

TAGUIG 76—Nuqui 15, Cruz 14, De Castro 11, Gonzales 7, Alberto 6, Zablan 6, Robillos 6, J. Reyes 6, Magsambol 4, Marucot 1, De Guia 1, Aclon 0, Vilar, Gandarosa 0, Constantino 0

Quarters: 19-14, 42-40, 53-56, 80-76.

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NISSAN

LeBron makes history

Youngest triple-double artist powers Cavs

PORTLAND,, Oregon—LeBron James had 27 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists in Clevaland's win over Portland to become the youngest player in NBA history to record a triple-double.

James is 20 years and 20 days old, younger than Lamar Odom, who was 20 years and 54 days old when he became the youngest to do it on Dec. 30, 1999 while with the Los Angeles Clippers. That was James' 15th birthday.

James' pass to Zydrunas Ilgauskas with 1:19 left gave him 10 assists and completed the triple-double. His teammates congratulated him during a timeout a short time later, and his mother cheered him from the stands.

Portland's Nick Van Exel had 28 points, while Damon Stoudamire had 27.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Allen Iverson scored 24 points, and Kyle Korver and Corliss Williamson made big plays down the stretch to lead the Philadelphia 76ers to a 107-105 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats.

Iverson, who leads the NBA in scoring with 28.5 points a game, was held to just six points in the second half of Wednesday night's game. It forced Korver, Williamson and Marc Jackson to carry the Sixers.

"I'd rather play bad and we win the game than play great and we lose," Iverson said.

Emeka Okafor led Charlotte with 18 points, 19 rebounds and three blocked shots.

In Toronto, Jalen Rose scored 20 of his 24 points in the second half, and Toronto beat New York, 98-81, for its third straight win.

Chris Bosh added 14 points and 14 rebounds for the Raptors, who have won seven of nine.

In Boston, Paul Pierce scored 28 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and rookie Al Jefferson added a career-high 17 points as Boston snapped Chicago's seven-game winning streak with a 92-83 victory over the Bulls.

The win was Boston's 10th in its last 12 home games.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Vince Carter scored a season-high 33 points, Jason Kidd added 17 points and 10 assists, Rodney Buford added 17 points and rookie Nenad Krstic had 16 in New Jersey's 96-90 win over Milwaukee.

JAMES: 27 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists REUTERS

Carter added nine rebounds and nine assists to go along with his 14-for-24 shooting effort, while Kidd had eight rebounds in falling two boards shy of his 62nd career triple-double.

In Miami, Shaquille O'Neal and Dwyane Wade each scored 25 points, helping Miami down Atlanta, 111-92, and improve the Eastern Conference's best record to 29-11.

Wade, who missed Miami's previous two games with back spasms, sore ribs and a migraine, scored 12 of his points in the third quarter to help the Heat pull away. O'Neal added 12 rebounds, and Eddie Jones scored 16 for Miami, which played its first home game in two weeks.

O'Neal made 11 of 20 shots and scored 25 or more points for the eighth straight game, extending his team record.

In New Orleans, Lee Nailon scored 30 points, and Dan Dickau's 17 points included a late go-ahead freethrow that helped the Hornets upset Indiana, 90-87.

Rodney Rogers had 12 points, the last on a stunning play as he slapped the rebound from Dickau's missed freethrow out of Jermaine O'Neal's hands, sending the ball into the hoop with 3.7 seconds left.

Reggie Miller missed a 3-point attempt from the corner that would have tied it.

In San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 25 points, including a game-winning driving layup in the final seconds, to lead San Antonio over the Los Angeles Clippers, 80-79.

Tim Duncan had 12 points and 14 rebounds for San Antonio, which improved the NBA's best home record to 21-1.

In Phoenix, three reserves led Memphis past Phoenix, 88-79, and extended the Suns losing streak to five games.

The Grizzlies won their fourth in a row and 10th in 11 games. The Suns had season lows in points and field goal shooting (33 percent) for the second game in a row.

With the loss, and San Antonio's victory over the Los Angeles Clippers, Phoenix (31-9) no longer has the NBA's best record. The Spurs are 32-9 and play Phoenix on Friday night.

In Los Angeles, Caron Butler hit a driving layup with 35 seconds to play to push the Lakers past Minnesota, 93-90. *AP*

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PCU, Brent bag cage titles

BIMBO Legaspi canned three freethrows in the dying seconds as Philippine Christian University-Dasmariñas turned back Perpetual Help-Calamba side, 76-74, to snare the 5th Southern Luzon Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SLCUAA) men's basketball crown right at the Altas' home court yesterday.

The Cavite Dolphins thus completed a rare seven-game championship sweep of the cage tournament, sanctioned by the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP).

They quashed a gallant last-ditch uprising of the Laguna Altas with the heroics of Legaspi, whose two freebies in the final 14 seconds gave PCU breathing room at 75-72.

Perpetual last threatened at 74-75 but time was not on the Altas' side.

"We still cannot believe this is happening," said an ecstatic head coach Lency Aransazo.

In women's play, Brent International School bagged the women's and girls' titles. Brent routed La Salle-Health and Science Campus, 63-37, for the women's crown, while its girls' team whipped Colegio de San Agustin, 67-45, for the girls' championship.

Wake-up call for coach Yeng Guiao

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IN 2001-2002, the Red Bull Barakos were winners thanks largely to a hard-nosed defense that was anchored on tireless Davonn Harp. But defense, once the team's hallmark, is now a question mark. The departure of Harp (and the sweet-shooting Mick Pennisi) caused a big gap in the middle and left the Barakos wounded and badly depleted. Red Bull finished dead last in the elimination phase of the ongoing PBA Philippine Cup.

But in spite of a bad year, I expect coach Yeng Guiao to turn things around especially in the next conference which gets going in March. Red Bull is still a dangerous team.

Since joining the pro league in 2000, the Photokina franchise has won two titles, one runner-up trophy, one third-place award and two fourth-place finishes. "Isn't this impressive enough?" asked team owner George Chua. "I guess that at one time or another, we're the envy of the other PBA clubs."

Compared with the record of seven other teams which made it to the finals since 2000, Red Bull has the best winning percentage of 67, succeeding twice in three finals appearances. It also tied with Alaska and Coca-Cola for the second number of titles won in that period with two championships, next to San Miguel Beer, which has three.

For the next conference, Red Bull management will definitely take steps to strengthen the organization and make it responsive to the wishes of its supporters in particular and the basketball fans in general. To achieve this goal, the 43-year-old Guiao should acquire new players to supplement Rico Villanueva, Lordy Tugade and Junthy Valenzuela, the team's greatest strength at present.

Villanueva is fast becoming the darling of the crowd with his admirable attitude, skill and talent. A former Ateneo Blue Eagle, the 6-foot-5, 24-year-old Villanueva is considered as a worthy successor to defensive gem Davonn Harp.

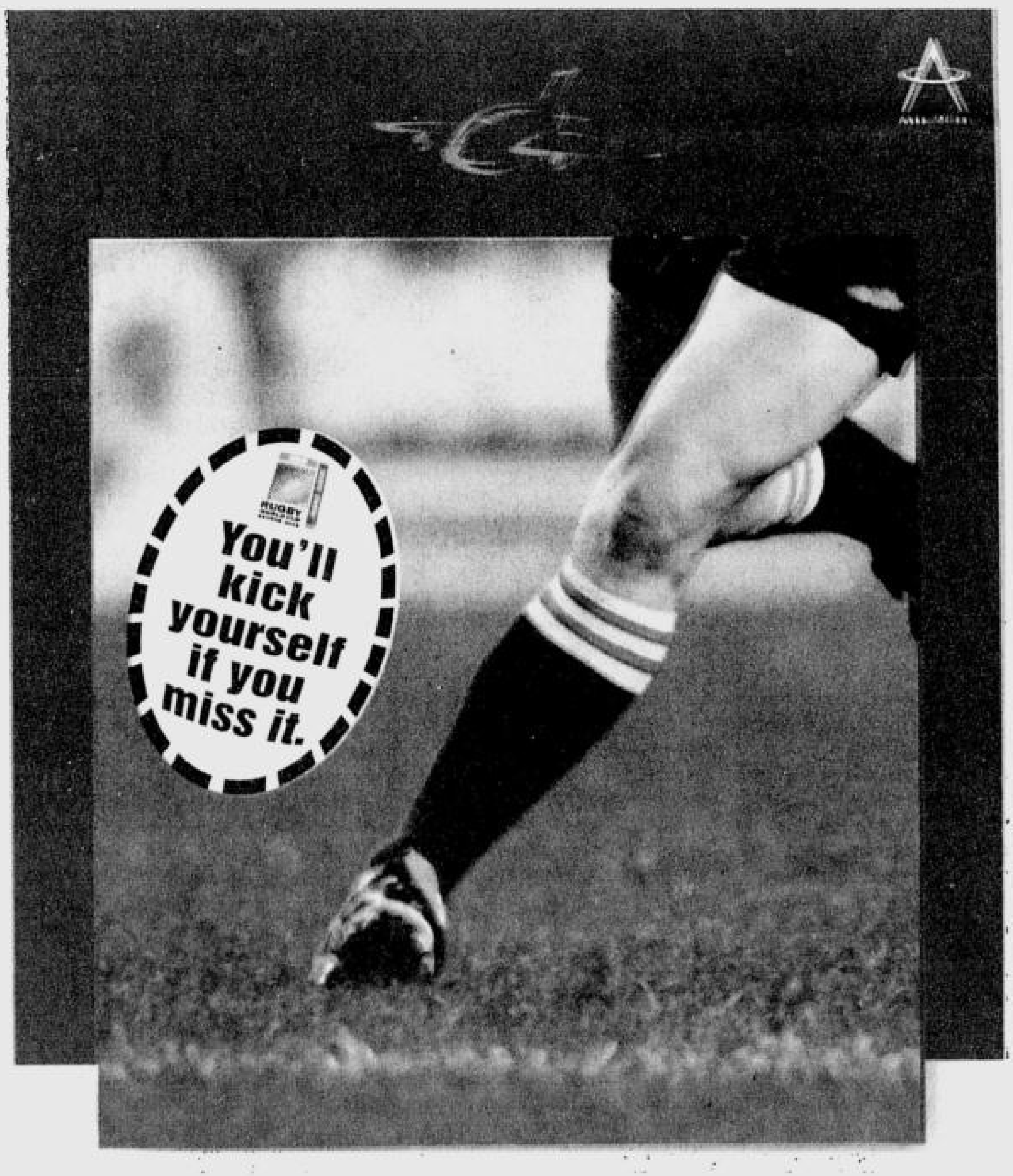
"Rico (Villanueva) is a fast learner," said Guiao. "He works hard during practice and stays sharp and focused during a game. *Masipag* (hardworking).

Signed to a lucrative contract worth P15.5 million until 2009, Villanueva said, "I'm very happy because I now have a permanent home."

The 6-foot-3 Junthy Valenzuela, 25, is the pride of Argao, Cebu. He is a slasher (an enforcer, according to national coach Chot Reyes) and accurate from the perimeter with the jump shot. Junthy can also rebound well and has great leaping ability. Still, Junthy has to improve on his individual defense as well as his shot selection. But he is very strong with his open-court offense.

A native of Pangasinan, the 27-year-old Lordy Tugade saw action with the National University Bulldogs in the UAAP and Red Bull in the Philippine Basketball League. He plays with raw courage and is known for the three-point shot as well. Lordy can drive and score from under the basket and can dunk shots on the fastbreak. He is a good offensive rebounder, too.

A former commissioner of the PBL, Yeng Guiao is now the vice governor of Pampanga. A son of the late Pampanga Gov. Bren Guiao, Yeng is also a respected horseowner, television analyst and, at one time, served as president of the Basketball Coaches Association of the Philippines. He graduated with a degree in industrial engineering at the UP Diliman.



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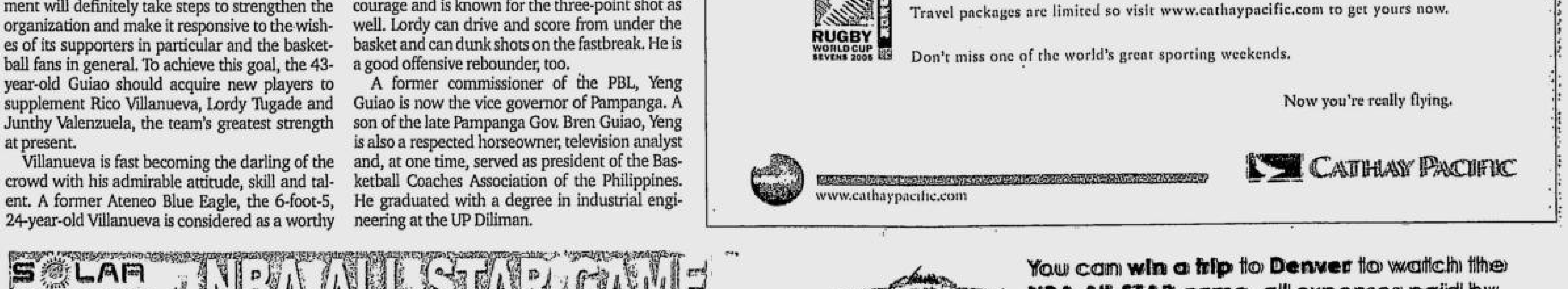

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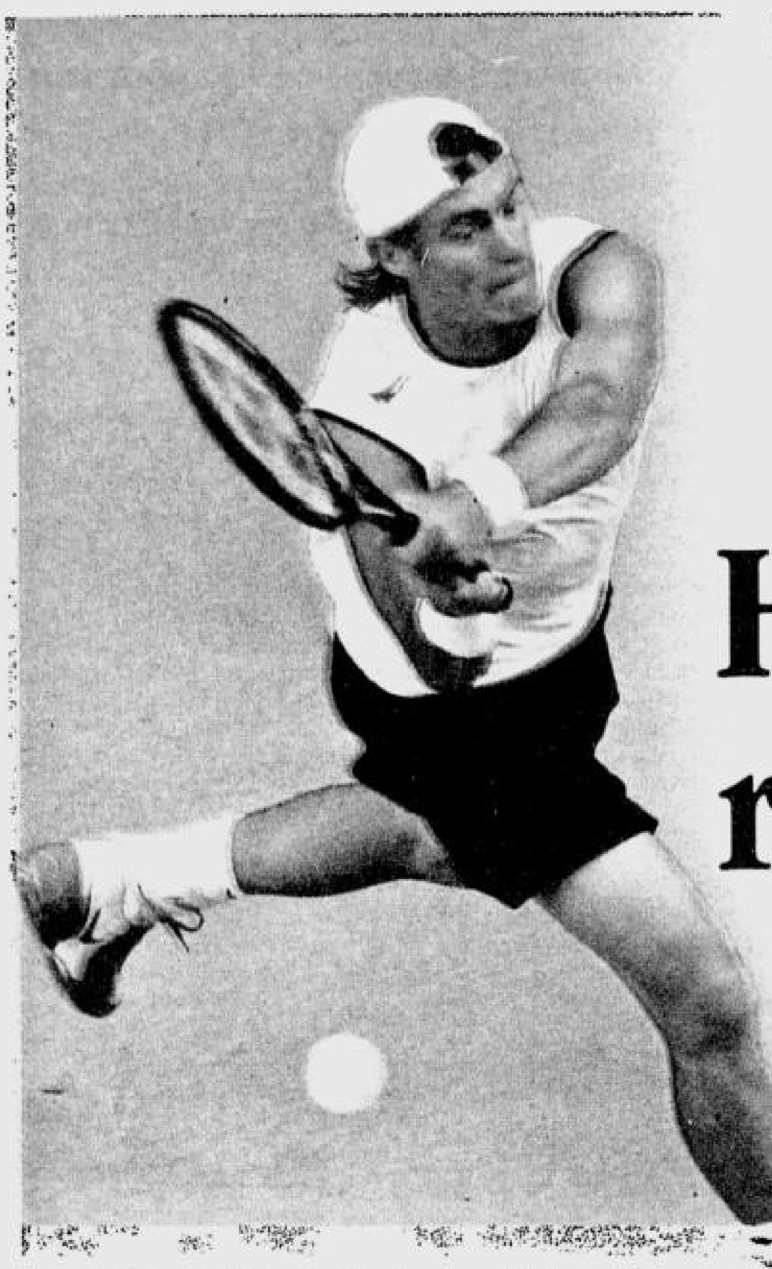

LLEYTON Hewitt whips a backhand to James Blake. REUTERS

THE TOP women seeds, (from left) Daniela Hantuchova, Anastasia Myskina, Venus Williams, Elena Dementieva and Lindsay Davenport all sailed to the next round of the Australian Open.

Hewitt summons will, rallies to tweak Blake

Roddick blasts fellow big-server Rusedski

MELBOURNE, Australia—Always a battler, Australia's Lleyton Hewitt had to dig deep Thursday to advance to the third round of the Australian Open, rallying to beat James Blake, whose run of bad luck continued after he cut his racket hand on a point that turned the match.

The tense center-court face-off, with the players exchanging fierce stares and lunging all over the court before third-seeded Hewitt finally prevailed, 4-6, 7-6 (8), 6-0, 6-3, was the highlight on a day when Venus Williams got a rigorous workout while ousting China's Peng Shuai, and No. 1-ranked Lindsay Davenport and French Open champion Anastasia Myskina both struggled before winning.

Seventh-seeded Tim Henman of Britain and ninth-seeded David Nalbandian advanced.

In a match-up of two of the game's fastest servers, second-seeded Andy Roddick outdueled Britain's Greg Rusedski, 6-0, 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.

There were few long rallies as the two players combined for 23 aces at up to 220 kmph (137 mph). Roddick had 49 winners and only eight unforced errors.

"I felt good out there tonight," said Roddick.

Hewitt, the hottest player on the men's tour after Roger Federer, lost the first set against Blake.

Blake was serving for the second set after breaking Hewitt, the crowd favorite, at 5-5. But with both players suffering from the jitters in an increasingly tense match, Hewitt broke back to force a tiebreaker in which both players had set points.

Hewitt converted his third with a sharply angled volley. Blake made a desperate dive, flicking the ball back while landing on his racket hand, opening a cut between his ring finger and pinkie that required treatment several times.

The eighth-seeded Williams, trying like her sister Serena to return to the zenith of women's tennis, had to run constantly from sideline to sideline against Peng, who just didn't have quite enough game to do any real damage and fell, 6-3, 6-1.

The 19-year-old Peng, ranked 48th, broke Williams twice in the first set. But Williams feasted on Peng's serves, particularly the slow second ones. And while Peng's flat groundstrokes had sting, she had little margin for error.

"Wasn't she a beautiful player?" Williams marveled afterward.

An ankle sprain, a wrist sprain and a leg muscle strain slowed Williams' comeback here last year from a six-month absence with an abdominal strain. Her ranking slipped at one point to 18th.

Davenport earned a 2-6, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Michaela Pastikova, ranked 99th and entered in her first Grand Slam after 13 failed qualifying attempts.

Davenport made 10 errors as she muddled through the first set, looking a little lethargic. She picked up her play and had only one unforced error in the second set before firing five aces in the third—three in one game.

"I just wasn't ready to be at my very best at the beginning," said Davenport.

The third-seeded Myskina, who has a reputation for moodiness, had problems with her serve and trailed, 3-1, in the first set, muttering to herself and gesturing at lines after losing points.

She regained control and won four consecutive games to close out the first set, and then didn't face a break point in the second while ousting No. 114 Tzipora Obziler, 6-4, 6-2.

In other women's matches, sixth-seeded Elena Dementieva beat fellow Russian Anna Chakvetadze, No. 14 Francesca Schiavone beat Tatiana Perebiynis and 26th-seeded Daniela Hantuchova downed 28-year-old Barbara Schett, who retired from singles play after the match. *AP*

OPEN NOTEBOOK

Facing one final serve, Austrian turns emotional

MELBOURNE, Australia—Daniela Hantuchova was serving for the match against Austrian Barbara Schett on Thursday when Schett, a 12-year WTA Tour veteran, felt tears form in her eyes.

Only then did the reality set in—this would be her last singles match in the top tier.

"It was not very emotional until she had match point, then suddenly, I had tears in my eyes," said Schett.

"I was like, 'Oh, my God, where does that come from now?' This was going to be the last point of my career. I just realized it and it was very emotional."

SCHETT REUTERS

Schett, who lost, 6-4, 6-0, decided last year that she would retire at the Australian Open, her favorite tournament but one where she had never progressed past the fourth round since her first visit in 1995.

"I always loved it here, and yeah, to escape the Austrian winter," said Schett. "That's why I wanted to quit here."

Schett, 28, joined the WTA Tour in 1992 and won three singles titles and 10 in doubles, earning just over US$3 million.

But a slide down the rankings—she was 79th to start the year, down from a career-best of No. 7 in 1999—helped make the decision.

"I thought if I'm not improving, if the passion is not coming back, then I definitely want to quit," said Schett. "It was a clear decision."

Schett said she'll take a few months off before planning her next move, either organizing tennis tournaments in Austria or doing some television commentating.

She often played doubles with Anna Kournikova and has one assignment left at Melbourne Park—mixed doubles with fellow Austrian Julian Knowles.

Emotional, too

French Open champion Anastasia Myskina often watches replays of her matches on television. Just as often, she doesn't like what she sees.

Myskina stormed around the court during her 6-4, 6-2 second-round win Thursday over Tzipora Obziler of Israel. She kicked balls, hit them into the court, yelled at herself and gestured with her hands to her face.

In the past she's thrown rackets and even yelled into the crowd at her coach, Jens Gerlach, for not supporting her enough during the match. Martina Navratilova calls her the "moodiest" of the Russian women.

Myskina says she's trying to improve, but on Thursday she looked like a work in progress.

I've "been talking to my coach a lot about this," Myskina said. "I see myself on TV, and I don't really like it. So I think that maybe I will change a lot. The way you look is really important."

Earlier in the week, Myskina called tennis an "emotional sport."

"It's you on the court, sometimes I think you have to express yourself," she said. "Sometimes it helps, sometimes not." *AP*

Lapid asks DOJ: Settle Taulava's case quickly

SEN. LITO Lapid, who aided local players in their battle to weed out fake foreign-born Filipinos from the Philippine Basketball Association is now making an appeal in behalf of one of the players suspected to have submitted false citizenship claims.

Lapid, the chair of the Senate Committee on Games, Amusement and Sports, said yesterday that Paul Asi Taulava should be allowed to resume playing basketball in the Philippines until such time that the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) are able to prove their allegation against the player in court.

Lapid said he wrote Justice secretary Raul Gonzales and urged him to speed up the case of Taulava to determine if he can resume his playing career.

"If Taulava is really a Filipino or a Filipino-American, then he should be allowed to play," Lapid said.

Lapid was referring to a Jan. 6 order of the regional trial court of Manila that barred the DOJ and the BI from stripping Taulava of his Filipino citizenship.

The court's permanent injunction also stopped the DOJ and the BI from deporting the 6'9" Talk 'N Text center who played for the Philippine team in the 2002 Asian Games. Taulava is married to a Filipina with whom he has two daughters.

In his ruling, Manila RTC Branch 34 Judge Romulo Lopez said that the DOJ and the BI do not have the authority to "denationalize" Taulava since his Filipino citizenship has been affirmed by the Philippine government in 2001.

The court said any further questions on Taulava's citizenship can only be resolved by a court weighing evidence from both sides.

The DOJ allegation against Taulava was the basis used by the PBA in suspending him from playing for his Talk 'N Text team.

Lapid also favored letting Taulava represent the country again in international competitions if the issue on his citizenship is settled.

St. Stephen routs UNO

DEFENDING champion St. Stephen High School lived up to its favorite's role as it routed UNO High School, 75-55, recently in the 29th Hitachi-Metro Manila Tiong Lian Basketball League at the Chiang Kai Shek Gym.

Ralph Cua and Lawrence Wu pitched in 18 and 17 points, respectively, to steer St. Stephen to its third consecutive victory.

St. Stephen earlier beat last year's runner-up Xavier School, 65-46, and host Chiang Kai Shek, 75-55.

Xavier School is second overall with a 2-1 slate following wins over Hope Christian High School, 65-56, and Uno High School, 78-71.

Highlights of the games will be aired over IBC-13 on Sunday, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Hope Christian School and Chiang Kai Shek are currently tied at 1-2 while UNO is at 1-3.

Tipon enters Vietnam boxing semifinals

HANOI—Bantamweight Joan Tipon nipped Nguyen Kien Cuong of host Vietnam, 30-28, Wednesday to barge into the semifinals of the Southeast Asian Amateur Boxing Championships here.

Tipon's victory gave the RP Alaxan-FR team a third semifinal berth and three automatic bronze medals after light flyweight Lhyven Salazar and flyweight Warlito Parrenas got a free trip to the last four by the luck of the draw.

The three go for at least a silver medal in Thursday's semifinal round.

Tipon fights Kyaw Kaw Lau of Myanmar, Salazar tangles with Tiwaron Arsai of Thailand while Parrenas takes on Nhothin Holapatiphone of Laos.

The three-man team, coached by Elmer Pamisa, was sent to this Vietnam capital by the Pacific Heights with support from the Philippine Sports Commission as part of the national training pool's buildup for the 2005 Southeast Asian Games set in Metro Manila and three other venues in November.

Salazar won the 2003 China International silver medal while Parrenas also salvaged a silver in the 2003 Goa India Championships. Tipon was a silver medalist in the 2003 Vietnam Southeast Asian Games.

Mickelson joins the golfing fray

SAN DIEGO—Vijay Singh is fresh off a victory in Hawaii, and still one of the last guys to leave the range. Tiger Woods had a close call at Kapalua, and Ernie Els is kicking himself for two chances that got away.

As for Phil Mickelson?

"A little rusty, as usual," Mickelson said Wednesday.

Mickelson and Davis Love III are the only PGA Tour players among the top 15 in the world who have not played this year. Mickelson waited until the Buick Invitational in his hometown to make his 2005 debut.

He has a tough act to follow in many respects.

For one thing, his last competitive round was a 59 in the PGA Grand Slam of Golf in Hawaii.

"That's going to be tough to do out here," Mickelson said with a sly grin, realizing that the South Course at Torrey Pines, where he plays his first round of the year on Thursday, will hold the US Open in three years.

He also is coming off a magical year in which he won his first major at the Masters, was a combined five shots away from winning all four majors, and was in Sunday contention at every tournament through early May.

"My expectations are certainly higher because I came so close last year," he said. "I was in contention at all four, and I had a great opportunity on the 18th hole to win them."

But there's no time to waste.

Singh, Woods and Els—known these days as "The Big Three"—already are off to a great start.

Lefty is about to join the fray.

"I think what makes it so exciting is that we have so many guys now that are playing well, and so many guys that are challenging to win tournaments," Mickelson said. "It makes the journey and the challenge of winning tournaments tougher, but it's more rewarding if you can accomplish it."

The strongest and deepest field of the year has all the trappings of a big tournament, unusual for this early in the season. *AP*

THE NATIONAL Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP) recently tendered a thanksgiving and victory party at the Manila Golf and Country Club on Jan. 14 for jungolfers who made their mark in international fronts. Several NGAP officers honored golfers such as 2004 Philippine Ladies Open champion Jayvie Agojo, JR Gonzales, AR Ramos, Deb de Villa, Dottie Ardina, Beverly Mendoza, Geleen Handog and Ina Guingona for their steady performances last year.

OPBF approves Mayol title defense Jan. 29

MAYOL: Undefeated champ

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

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The undefeated Mayol, ranked No. 2 by the WBC, is slightly favored over challenger Polii, who will be ranked No. 2 by the OPBF following his knockout victory over erstwhile No. 2 and compatriot La Syukur.

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The 21-year-old Mayol, with 19 straightwins (15 KOs) is looking for a crack at WBC champ Isaac Bustos of Mexico sometime this year.

The event is part of the sports development program of Senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., who will award the belt to the winner of the 12-round clash. Part of the proceeds will go to the SEA Games fund and to the different projects of the Rotary Club of Rizal Mideast.

In the chief support, ex-Philippine flyweight boss Edgar Rodrigo will take on Thai Somyot Vor Surapol in a 12-round OPBF flyweight eliminator.

Rodrigo, the only fighter to beat Z "The Dream" Gorres, will try to put himself back on track following losses abroad.

Lady Legends regain third; Tigresses lead

By Musong R. Castillo

UNDERMANNED but slowly getting back into the groove, the Philippine Sports Commission Lady Legends yesterday dispatched Far Eastern with ease, 25-22, 25-19, 25-16, then boldly promised to go all the way in the Shakey's V-League.

"I don't care who we face (in the semis), but we'll make the finals and win," said PSC coach Tats Suzara, moments after wrapping up their sixth win in 10 games in just one-hour and 11 minutes at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

"I'm not belittling the opposition, I just feel that we again have the tools to start winning games again."

Suzara was referring to setter Len-Len Escollante, who returned from a family commitment in Canada during the holidays to spark the PSC offense that again flaunted intimidating might.

The Legends regained solo third with the win, and could draw either Santo Tomas or La Salle in the best-of-three semifinals starting Feb. 1.

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Roxanne Pimentel scored 27 points in the Tigresses ninth win in 10 games, which gave UST back the solo lead while putting the Lady Pirates' playoff chances in peril. Lyceum dropped to 4-5.

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Escollante, also the national canoeing coach, missed four games.

"The return (of Escollante) will put order in our game again," Suzara added. "She's a big boost to the team and we're looking to go all the way with her."

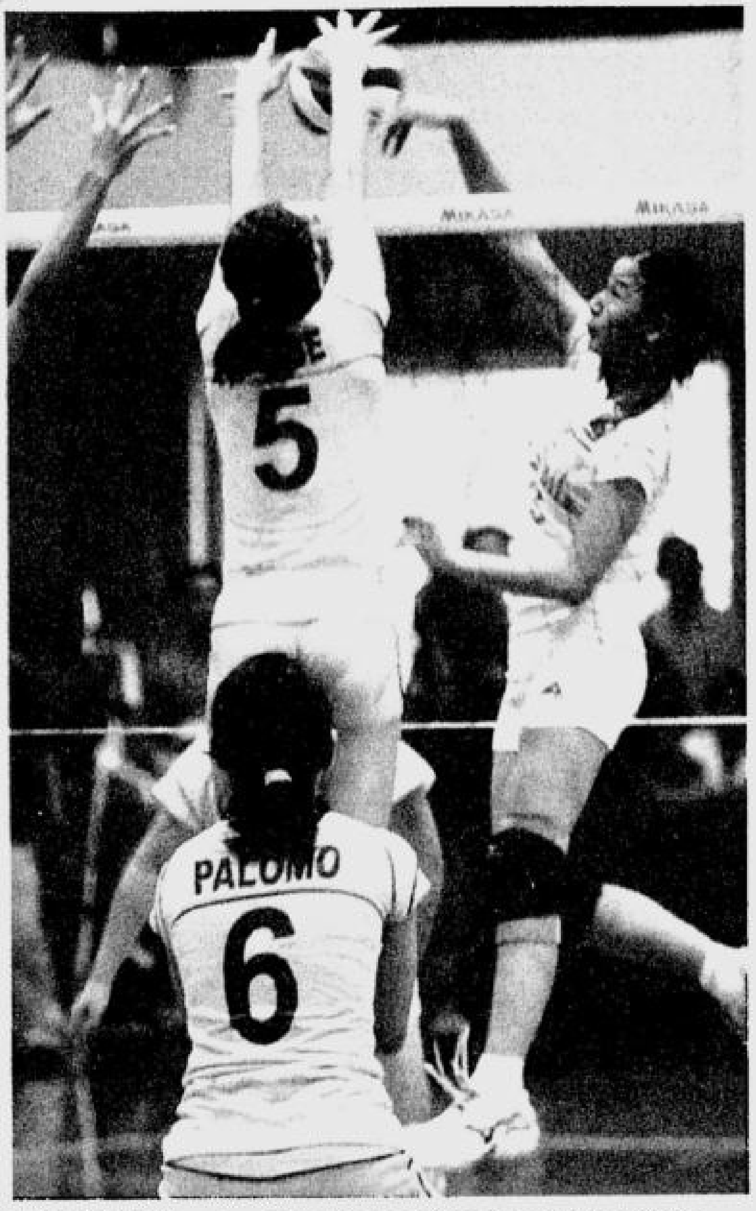
Big Zenaida Ybanez led the Legends with 14 points, 10 coming on kills and shifty Amelia Guanco had nine of her 11 points on attack.

Rosemarie Prochina also added 11 and Thelma Barina-Rojas, the country's best player in the 1980s, played in the final two sets and was a steadying force in the baseline.

Meanwhile, tournament commissioner Tony Boy Liao said he would ask Far Eastern coach Florentino Santos to explain why his team did not play all out in the final set.

"We have an obligation to our fans, and that is to give them the best brand of volleyball we could," Liao told the INQUIRER. "What he (Florentino) did was very unsportsmanlike."

Florentino, down two sets, fielded his second stringers in the third, sending his starters on the floor again only after PSC had built a 12-2 lead.


TIGRESSES' Mary Jean Balse blocks a spike by La Salle's Desiree Hernandez in this file photo.

SPORTSWATCH

Antonio drops two more games

FILIPINO GM Rogelio "Joey" Antonio suffered two more losses and dropped to ninth place in the 2005 Montreal World Chess Tournament yesterday at the Saint-Laurent Recreation Center in Montreal, Canada. Antonio bowed to top seed GM Dmitry Jakovenko (Elo 2596) of Russia in the sixth round and to GM Alexander-Nataf Igor (Elo 2557) of France in the seventh for his fourth straight defeat that left him stuck at 2.0 points with only two rounds to go. Jakovenko, the 2001 World U-18 champion, beat IM Jean Herbert in the seventh round to keep the lead with 6.5 points. Due to his lackluster performance, Antonio's 2539 Elo rating is sure to drop even if he wins his last two matches against Herbert and IM Eugene Perelshteyn of the US. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

GNC endorsers go on mall tour

GNC endorsers and basketball players Nic Belasco, Ali Peek and Mac Cardona will be on hand to sign autographs and pose for pictures when they go on mall tour. GNC has answered the Filipino consumers' needs for quality nutritional supplements with its leading Mega Men, Women's Ultra Mega, Herbal Plus product line and Pro Performance Sports Nutrition Line. "The number of health-conscious Filipinos using GNC products has steadily increased throughout the years," said GNC brand officer VJ Platon. Because of the trust our Filipino consumers have placed on our products, we've strengthened our commitment to help improve their quality of life through better nutrition and healthier living for many years to come."

San Antonio de Padua wins

DEFENDING high school champion San Antonio de Padua got off to a big start in the 9th Milo Best Women's Volleyball League (WVL) last Sunday by beating St. James Academy, 25-15, 25-22, at the Ateneo Grade School courts in Quezon City. Colegio de San Agustin led the elementary (competitive) winners by crushing Miriam College, 25-14, 25-14. Milo Sports Executive Pat Guc-Ong graced the opening ceremony of the tourney. The other results: Elementary (competitive)—De La Salle Lipa d. San Beda-Alabang, 25-14, 21-25, 15-5. Elementary (developmental)—Poveda Learning Center d. New Era University, 25-23, 25-11; Assumption College d. Baesa Adventist Elem. School, 25-13, 25-18; Dominican School d. Miriam, 25-14, 25-15; Southville International d. St. Scholastica's College, 25-20, 25-19; and Miriam d. Baesa Adventist, 25-8, 25-11. High school (competitive)—La Salle Antipolo d. New Era University, 25-11, 25-11, 22-25, 19-17; Colegio de Sta. Rosa d. Assumption Antipolo, 17-25, 25-16, 18-16; St. Bridget School d. St. Scholastica's College, 26-24, 26-24; Holy Family School d. Don Bosco Manila, 25-4, 25-19; and Notre Dame of Greater Manila d. Holy Trinity Academy, 25-0, 25-0.

Darts Council holds first leg

THE FIRST leg of the Metro Manila Darts Circuit 2005 will be held this weekend at the Daungan Restaurant on Mother Ignacia St. in Quezon City. A classified doubles tournament will kick off action tomorrow starting at 8 p.m. while a Darts Council of the Philippines Open Singles event will be held on Sunday starting at 5 p.m. Each event offers a cash prize of P10,000 aside from special prizes put up by the Darts Council of the Philippines and Terton Craft, the main sponsor. Entry fee per event is P150. Registration for the singles event starts at 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. for the doubles.

PCCA holds 4-cock derby

BIG-TIME cockfighting resumes today at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit when the third edition of Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 4-Cock Derby sizzles at 6 p.m. with 62 fights. Sponsors are Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten. Seven participants topped the second leg on Jan. 7: Benjie Lim (Banahaw), Madison Go (Master of the Ring), Tony Faustino (EDL Farms), Jun Villar and Gene Avendano (JV Scaramouche), Jack Chung (Union JNL Gamefarm I), Tamon Mancenares/Madlambayan Brothers (Clearcut RM) and Jimmy Atayde (Moon Farm).

Barnett holds free clinic today

WORLD-RENOWNED gamefowl breeder Bruce Barnett of Blackwater, Jasper, Alabama will conduct a free clinic on gamefowl breeding, conditioning and other topics starting at 1 p.m. today at the new Gateway Theater beside Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City. Known for his Sweater lines of fighting cocks, Barnett is in the Philippines competing in the World Slasher Cup International 8-Cock Derby. The clinic is sponsored by Thunderbird Power Feeds and Univet. For reservations, call tel. 638-8332; 631-8501 loc. 7737 or 8850.

Sports Plus airs Legends of Poker

THE FIRST female finalist of the World Poker Tour this year will be ranged against five other professional card players in a game dominated by men when Sports Plus airs the Bicycle Casino's Legends of Poker championship tonight at 7. Kathy Liebert, who pocketed a $1-million prize last season, is out to prove she's no fluke against Mark Seif and Hon Le. Sports Plus will telecast the tour's 11 episodes on channel 45 for Sky Cable, 21 for Home Cable and 42 for Destiny cable subscribers.

RACING TIPS
AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Gabriela 2. Big Mama 3. Pasirit
Race 2—1. Nagmamahal 2. Saving Grace 3. Sand Splash 4. Blitzkrieg
Race 3—1. Manila Magic 2. Friendly Venture 3. War Epic 4. Burst of Speed
Race 4—1. Prince of Africa 2. Sir Benjo 3. Pilong Bakod 4. God Is Good 5. Don't Tell Me
Race 5—1. Montezuma 2. Balang Westside 3. Doña Gelay 4. Shower of Stars
Race 6—1. Concorde/Nothing to Declare 2. Elita 3. Native Land 4. Cat's Jewel 5. Aba Aba Aba
Race 7—1. Dynamic Jason 2. Sugar Ray 3. Extreme Connection 4. Silver Dollar 5. Nitty Gritty
Race 8—1. Beatitudes 2. Friendly Venture 3. Here I Come 4. Voice of Destiny 5. Rindo Maker
Race 9—1. Hakuna Matata 2. Well Noted 3. Showtime Lady 4. Naughty 5. Stingray 6. Iverson

SEAG training chest exceeds goal

SOME said it could not be done. But Tuesday's assembly at Malacañang's Heroes Hall proved the detractors wrong.

Medalyang Ginto executive director Tessa Mangahas yesterday admitted that certain sectors were skeptical about the "Sports Godfather" scheme that First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo recommended as a fund-raising vehicle for the second batch of athlete-beneficiaries of the First Gentleman Foundation for Sports.

More than 40 godfathers put in P150 million in the athletes' training chest, an amount that exceeded the modest targets of the First Gentleman Foundation.

"We pegged a target of P120 million," said Mangahas. "It was a formidable amount for us since in August 2003, we were happy with P22 million and 18 godfathers.

Other sports godfathers include Antonio "Tony Boy" Cojuangco, Teresita Sy-Coson of the SM Group of Companies, PAGCOR, ICTSI, Reynaldo David (DBP), Vivian Yuchengco, Lucio Tan Jr., Hermie Esguerra, Manny Pangilinan, Petron, Samsung, Globe, GMA Network, Equitable Banking, Puyat Sports, Ernest Escaler, Megaworld Corp., FG Mike Arroyo, Marvi Cojuangco-Yulo, Edgardo Manda, Jose Cojuangco, Pocholo Borromeo, Jack Rodriguez, Nestlé, Smart, Aboitiz, Andy Soriano, PSCO, Cathay Steel and, several members of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

ARROYO

Several donors declined to be named.

Smart, Globe and Philippine Airlines also launched fund-raising activities during the event. Text messaging will be utilized by the two giant telecommunication companies to augment funds for the SEAG, while "Fly High, Team Tagumpay!", the tie-up between PAL and the FG Foundation will allow inbound passengers to contribute to the sports effort.

Sport Godfather amount pledged:

Aquatics (diving, swimming, water polo)—Antonio Cojuangco, P8.9 million; **Archery**—SMC, P5 million; **Arnis**—Vivian Yuchengco and Equitable Banking, P300,000; **Athletics**—Pagcor, P6 million; **Badminton**—Alfredo Romualdez and Vivian Yuchengco, P1 million; **Baseball** (men)—San Miguel Corp., P1.5 million; **Basketball** (men)—SMC, P1.5 million; **Basketball** (women)—SMC P1.5 million; **Billiards**—Puyat Sports, P1 million; **Bodybuilding**—Ernest Escaler, P1.3 million; **Bowling**—Megaworld, P4 million; **Boxing**—SMC, P3 million; **Canoe/Kayak**—P2 million; **Chess**—FG Mike Arroyo, P4 million; **Cycling**—Pagcor P3 million; **Dancesport**—Marvi Cojuangco-Yulo and SMC, P2 million; **Dragon Boat** (men)—Edgardo Manda, P1.5 million; **Dragon Boat** (women)—P1.5 million; **Equestrian**—Jose Cojuangco, P4 million; **Fencing**—Manny Pangilinan, P5 million; **Football** (men)—Pocholo Borromeo, P1.5 million; **Football** (women)—Jack Rodriguez, P1.5 million; **Golf**—ICTSI, P3 million; **Gymnastics**—Nestlé, P4 million; **Judo**—SMC P3 million; **Lawn Bowls**—P1 million; **Lawn Tennis**—Globe, P1 million; **Muay Thai**—P1 million; **Pencak Silat**—P800,000; **Rowing**—Aboitiz, P1.5 million; **Sailing**—ICTSI and Andy Soriano, P3 million; **Sepak Takraw**—Rey David-DBP, P400,000; **Shooting**—Lucio Tan Jr., P7 million; **Softball** (men)—Hermie Esguerra P1.5 million; **Softball** (women)—Hermie Esguerra P1.5 million; **Squash**—Manny Pangilinan P400,000; **Taekwondo**—Petron and Samsung, P5 million; **Table Tennis**—P2 million; **Volleyball**—P3 million; **Weightlifting**—Globe, P1 million; **Wrestling**—P4 million; **Wushu**—SMC P5 million.

Other Donors:

GMA Network, P100,000; Henry Bon Liong, P100,000; Louie Lee, P100,000; Philam Foundation, P100,000; Chan Kok Bin, P100,000; Tan She Ling, P100,000; Tan Tian Siong, 100,000; PCSO c/o Serge Valencia, P1,000,000; SM c/o Teresita Sy-Coson, P5 million; Benedicto Sly, P100,000; Benjamin Ynson Sr., 100,000; Cathay Steel c/o John Ng, P1.5 million.

'My job is done'

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE MAN with the most recognizable face this side of the earth was about to speed away to the first tee box when, after seeing me coming his way, he delayed his takeoff a minute or two. By the look in his eyes, I knew that he knew I was up to something: To ask some questions.

Most people, when they are about to play golf, would not want to be disturbed for fear their game plan for the day might be derailed. Even a cell phone call from the wife could go unheeded.

He was behind the wheel of a green E-Z Go, a battery-operated golf cart, this misty morning, when birds were chirping atop a huge African palm tree nearby at The Country Club, the country's most exclusive course with only about 128 members listed thus far. The blades of grass were still wet with dew, and the sun was barely out of the horizon.

He could have just simply waved me away and I would not have minded, for I did not have the stature to even raise a whimper had he done so. This was, after all, Mike Arroyo, the first ever Filipino to wear the tag, "First Gentleman."

This morning, he looked fresh as a daisy, wearing a blue shirt buttressed by a brown golf vest with the word "Tiger" emblazoned on his left chest.

"Today, I wake up as the happiest person on earth," he said. "I have finally realized my dream of tapping my friends to help Philippine sports. My job is done."

Just the day before, he was host to the country's top sports leaders and sports patrons at Malacañang. In that occasion drumbeaters had fondly called "pledging session for sports," the First Gentleman saw his expectations exceed sky-high: He drew a whopping P150 million from his friends, which was P30 million more than what he said he was expecting to generate.

"With that amount, our athletes can't complain anymore," he said. "Their training expenses are now more than covered. I made sure the money goes straight to the athletes through their sports associations. Likewise, my Foundation will never, ever receive a single centavo."

He said he did what he did "to make our athletes preparing for the SEA Games here this November feel we will always be by their side, that their welfare will always be in our mind."

The First Gentleman said that if the country "would win 120 of the 395 or so gold medals staked in November, we might yet emerge overall champions."

The country won 48 gold medals to place fourth overall in Vietnam in 2003, when the friends of the First Gentleman shelled out P22 million in support of our athletes.

"Actually, a good showing in the SEA Games could just be the start of something big for Philippine sports," he said. "There is the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, next year. And then in 2008, the Beijing Olympics. The first Olympic gold medal has always been the ultimate dream of every Filipino. We will never stop chasing that dream."

I'm with you there, Sir. But, honestly, until now, I am still as surprised as Valentin Dakuykoy—pleasantly, that is, like VD—at the amount you had generated for our athletes' training for the SEA Games. Gosh! A hundred and fifty million pesos! In just half a day at that! With San Miguel Corporation tossing in P100 million!

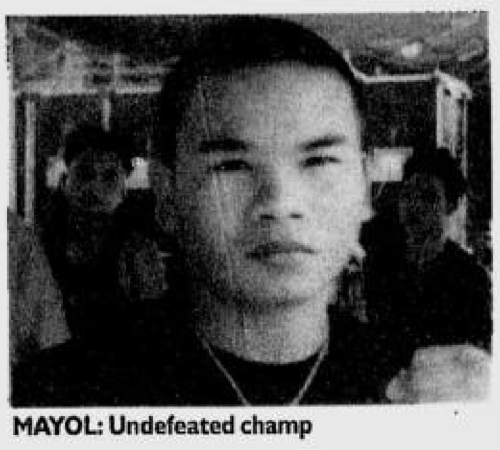
Who said Mike Arroyo was lacking in friends, if not credibility?

Did it take you nights to conceptualize the project, Sir?

"No, not really," he said. "It took me only about a week to finalize the idea," he said. "I never realized I've got so many friends out there *pala*, all willing to help in our noble project for the good of Philippine sports."

Upon hearing that, I extended my hand for the congratulatory handshake. And, with the interview over, he set out for the golf course. But before he could step on the gas, I said to him: "Good luck, Sir. Hope you play well today."

"Oh, that," the First Gentleman said, breaking into a smile. "Golf to me is for enjoyment. I am just here to relax, savor the breeze, to be with you guys. Thank you, again."



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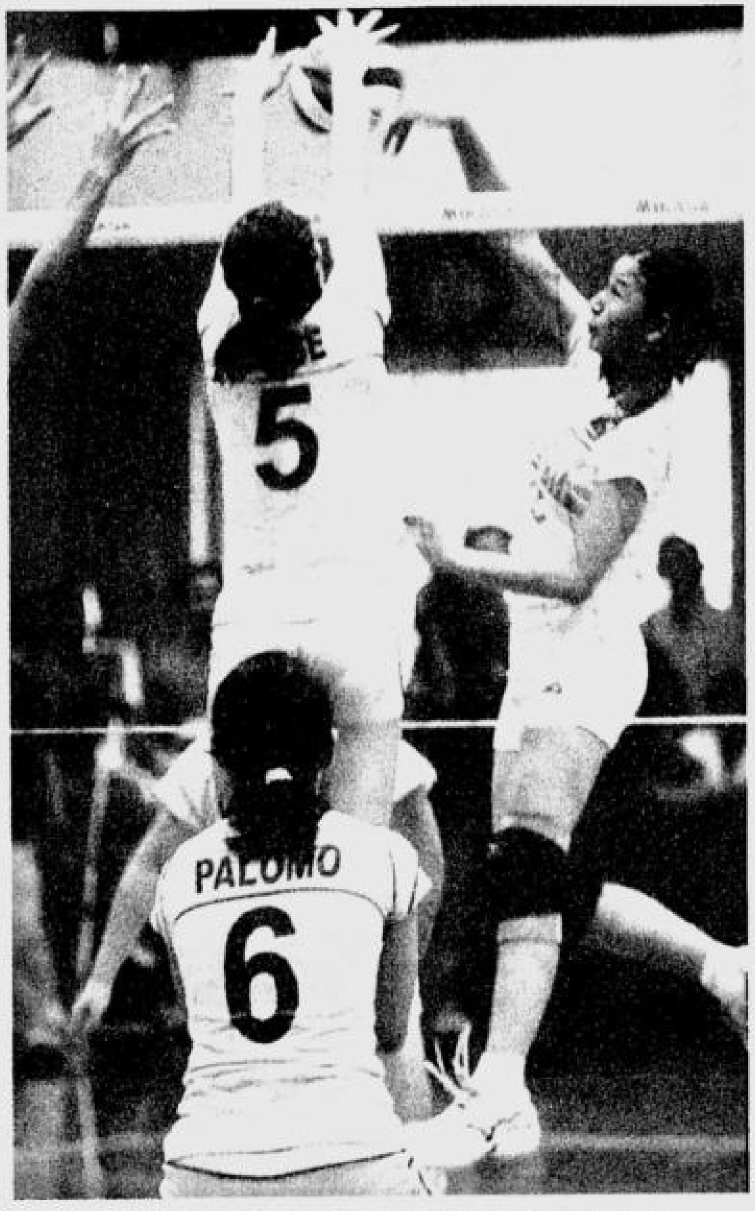

TIGRESSES' Mary Jean Balse blocks a spike by La Salle's Desiree Hernandez in this file photo.

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More than 40 godfathers put in P150 million in the athletes' training chest, an amount that exceeded the modest targets of the First Gentleman Foundation.

"We pegged a target of P120 million," said Mangahas. "It was a formidable amount for us since in August 2003, we were happy with P22 million and 18 godfathers.

Other sports godfathers include Antonio "Tony Boy" Cojuangco, Teresita Sy-Coson of the SM Group of Companies, PAGCOR, ICTSI, Reynaldo David (DBP), Vivian Yuchengco, Lucio Tan Jr., Hermie Esguerra, Manny Pangilinan, Petron, Samsung, Globe, GMA Network, Equitable Banking, Puyat Sports, Ernest Escaler, Megaworld Corp., FG Mike Arroyo, Marvi Cojuangco-Yulo, Edgardo Manda, Jose Cojuangco, Pocholo Borromeo, Jack Rodriguez, Nestlé, Smart, Aboitiz, Andy Soriano, PSCO, Cathay Steel and several members of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

ARROYO

Several donors declined to be named.

Smart, Globe and Philippine Airlines also launched fund-raising activities during the event. Text messaging will be utilized by the two giant telecommunication companies to augment funds for the SEAG, while "Fly High, Team Tagumpay!", the tie-up between PAL and the FG Foundation will allow inbound passengers to contribute to the sports effort.

Sport Godfather amount pledged:

Aquatics (diving, swimming, water polo)—Antonio Cojuangco, P8.9 million; **Archery**—SMC, P5 million; **Arnis**—Vivian Yuchengco and Equitable Banking, P300,000; **Athletics**—Pagcor, P6 million; **Badminton**—Alfredo Romualdez and Vivian Yuchengco, P1 million; **Baseball (men)**—San Miguel Corp., P1.5 million; **Basketball (men)**—SMC, P1.5 million; **Basketball (women)**—SMC P1.5 million; **Billiards**—Puyat Sports, P1 million; **Bodybuilding**—Ernest Escaler, P1.3 million; **Bowling**—Megaworld, P4 million; **Boxing**—SMC, P3 million; **Canoe/Kayak**—P2 million; **Chess**—FG Mike Arroyo, P4 million; **Cycling**—Pagcor P3 million; **Dancesport**—Marvi Cojuangco-Yulo and SMC, P2 million; **Dragon Boat (men)**—Edgardo Manda, P1.5 million; **Dragon Boat (women)**—P1.5 million; **Equestrian**—Jose Cojuangco, P4 million; **Fencing**—Manny Pangilinan, P5 million; **Football (men)**—Pocholo Borromeo, P1.5 million; **Football (women)**—Jack Rodriguez, P1.5 million; **Golf**—ICTSI, P3 million; **Gymnastics**—Nestlé, P4 million; **Judo**—SMC P3 million; **Lawn Bowls**—P1 million; **Lawn Tennis**—Globe, P1 million; **Muay Thai**—P1 million; **Pencak Silat**—P800,000; **Rowing**—Aboitiz, P1.5 million; **Sailing**—ICTSI and Andy Soriano, P3 million; **Sepak Takraw**—Rey David-DBP, P400,000; **Shooting**—Lucio Tan Jr., P7 million; **Softball (men)**—Hermie Esguerra P1.5 million; **Softball (women)**—Hermie Esguerra P1.5 million; **Squash**—Manny Pangilinan P400,000; **Taekwondo**—Petron and Samsung, P5 million; **Table Tennis**—P2 million; **Volleyball**—P3 million; **Weightlifting**—Globe, P1 million; **Wrestling**—P4 million; **Wushu**—SMC P5 million.

Other Donors:

GMA Network, P100,000; Henry Bon Liong, P100,000; Louie Lee, P100,000; Philam Foundation, P100,000; Chan Kok Bin, P100,000; Tan She Ling, P100,000; Tan Tian Siong, 100,000; PCSO c/o Serge Valencia, P1,000,000; SM c/o Teresita Sy-Coson, P5 million; Benedicto Sly, P100,000; Benjamin Ynson Sr., 100,000; Cathay Steel c/o John Ng, P1.5 million.

SPORTSWATCH

Antonio drops two more games

FILIPINO GM Rogelio "Joey" Antonio suffered two more losses and dropped to ninth place in the 2005 Montreal World Chess Tournament yesterday at the Saint-Laurent Recreation Center in Montreal, Canada. Antonio bowed to top seed GM Dmitry Jakovenko (Elo 2596) of Russia in the sixth round and to GM Alexander-Nataf Igor (Elo 2557) of France in the seventh for his fourth straight defeat that left him stuck at 2.0 points with only two rounds to go. Jakovenko, the 2001 World U-18 champion, beat IM Jean Herbert in the seventh round to keep the lead with 6.5 points. Due to his lackluster performance, Antonio's 2539 Elo rating is sure to drop even if he wins his last two matches against Herbert and IM Eugene Perelshteyn of the US. ***NM Marlon Bernardino***

GNC endorsers go on mall tour

GNC endorsers and basketball players Nic Belasco, Ali Peek and Mac Cardona will be on hand to sign autographs and pose for pictures when they go on mall tour. GNC has answered the Filipino consumers' needs for quality nutritional supplements with its leading Mega Men, Women's Ultra Mega, Herbal Plus product line and Pro Performance Sports Nutrition Line. "The number of health-conscious Filipinos using GNC products has steadily increased throughout the years," said GNC brand officer VJ Platon. Because of the trust our Filipino consumers have placed on our products, we've strengthened our commitment to help improve their quality of life through better nutrition and healthier living for many years to come."

San Antonio de Padua wins

DEFENDING high school champion San Antonio de Padua got off to a big start in the 9th Milo Best Women's Volleyball League (WVL) last Sunday by beating St. James Academy, 25-15, 25-22, at the Ateneo Grade School courts in Quezon City. Colegio de San Agustin led the elementary (competitive) winners by crushing Miriam College, 25-14, 25-14. Milo Sports Executive Pat Guc-Ong graced the opening ceremony of the tourney. The other results: Elementary (competitive)—De La Salle Lipa d. San Beda-Alabang, 25-14, 21-25, 15-5. Elementary (developmental)—Poveda Learning Center d. New Era University, 25-23, 25-11; Assumption College d. Baesa Adventist Elem. School, 25-13, 25-18; Dominican School d. Miriam, 25-14, 25-15; Southville International d. St. Scholastica's College, 25-20, 25-19; and Miriam d. Baesa Adventist, 25-8, 25-11. High school (competitive)—La Salle Antipolo d. New Era University, 25-11, 25-11, 22-25, 19-17; Colegio de Sta. Rosa d. Assumption Antipolo, 17-25, 25-16, 18-16; St. Bridget School d. St. Scholastica's College, 26-24, 26-24; Holy Family School d. Don Bosco Manila, 25-4, 25-19; and Notre Dame of Greater Manila d. Holy Trinity Academy, 25-0, 25-0.

Darts Council holds first leg

THE FIRST leg of the Metro Manila Darts Circuit 2005 will be held this weekend at the Daungan Restaurant on Mother Ignacia St. in Quezon City. A classified doubles tournament will kick off action tomorrow starting at 8 p.m. while a Darts Council of the Philippines Open Singles event will be held on Sunday starting at 5 p.m. Each event offers a cash prize of P10,000 aside from special prizes put up by the Darts Council of the Philippines and Terton Craft, the main sponsor. Entry fee per event is P150. Registration for the singles event starts at 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. for the doubles.

PCCA holds 4-cock derby

BIG-TIME cockfighting resumes today at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit when the third edition of Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 4-Cock Derby sizzles at 6 p.m. with 62 fights. Sponsors are Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten. Seven participants topped the second leg on Jan. 7: Benjie Lim (Banahaw), Madison Go (Master of the Ring), Tony Faustino (EDL Farms), Jun Villar and Gene Avendano (JV Scaramouche), Jack Chung (Union JNL Gamefarm I), Tamon Mancenares/Madlambayan Brothers (Clearcut RM) and Jimmy Atayde (Moon Farm).

Barnett holds free clinic today

WORLD-RENOWNED gamefowl breeder Bruce Barnett of Blackwater, Jasper, Alabama will conduct a free clinic on gamefowl breeding, conditioning and other topics starting at 1 p.m. today at the new Gateway Theater beside Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City. Known for his Sweater lines of fighting cocks, Barnett is in the Philippines competing in the World Slasher Cup International 8-Cock Derby. The clinic is sponsored by Thunderbird Power Feeds and Univet. For reservations, call tel. 638-8332; 631-8501 loc. 7737 or 8850.

Sports Plus airs Legends of Poker

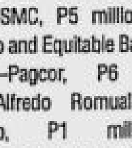
THE FIRST female finalist of the World Poker Tour this year will be ranged against five other professional card players in a game dominated by men when Sports Plus airs the Bicycle Casino's Legends of Poker championship tonight at 7. Kathy Liebert, who pocketed a $1-million prize last season, is out to prove she's no fluke against Mark Seif and Hon Le. Sports Plus will telecast the tour's 11 episodes on channel 45 for Sky Cable, 21 for Home Cable and 42 for Destiny cable subscribers.

RACING
AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Gabriela 2. Big Mama 3. Pasirit
Race 2—1. Nagmamahal 2. Saving Grace 3. Sand Splash 4. Blitzkrieg
Race 3—1. Manila Magic 2. Friendly Venture 3. War Epic 4. Burst of Speed
Race 4—1. Prince of Africa 2. Sir Benjo 3. Pitong Bakod 4. God Is Good 5. Don't Tell Me
Race 5—1. Montezuma 2. Batang Westside 3. Doña Galay 4. Shower of Stars
Race 6—1. Concorde/Nothing to Declare 2. Elite 3. Native Land 4. Cat's Jewel 5. Aba Aba Aba
Race 7—1. Dynamic Jason 2. Sugar Ray 3. Extreme Connection 4. Silver Dollar 5. Nitty Gritty
Race 8—1. Beatitudes 2. Friendly Venture 3. Here I Come 4. Voice of Destiny 5. Rindo Maker
Race 9—1. Hakuna Matata 2. Well Noted 3. Showtime Lady 4. Naughty 5. Stingray 6. Iverson

'My job is done'

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

THE MAN with the most recognizable face this side of the earth was about to speed away to the first tee box when, after seeing me coming his way, he delayed his takeoff a minute or two. By the look in his eyes, I knew that he knew I was up to something: To ask some questions.

Most people, when they are about to play golf, would not want to be disturbed for fear their game plan for the day might be derailed. Even a cell phone call from the wife could go unheeded.

He was behind the wheel of a green E-Z Go, a battery-operated golf cart, this misty morning, when birds were chirping atop a huge African palm tree nearby at The Country Club, the country's most exclusive course with only about 128 members listed thus far. The blades of grass were still wet with dew, and the sun was barely out of the horizon.

He could have just simply waved me away and I would not have minded, for I did not have the stature to even raise a whimper had he done so. This was, after all, Mike Arroyo, the first ever Filipino to wear the tag, "First Gentleman."

This morning, he looked fresh as a daisy, wearing a blue shirt buttressed by a brown golf vest with the word "Tiger" emblazoned on his left chest.

"Today, I wake up as the happiest person on earth," he said. "I have finally realized my dream of tapping my friends to help Philippine sports. My job is done."

Just the day before, he was host to the country's top sports leaders and sports patrons at Malacañang. In that occasion drumbeaters had fondly called "pledging session for sports," the First Gentleman saw his expectations exceed sky-high: He drew a whopping P150 million from his friends, which was P30 million more than what he said he was expecting to generate.

"With that amount, our athletes can't complain anymore," he said. "Their training expenses are now more than covered. I made sure the money goes straight to the athletes through their sports associations. Likewise, my Foundation will never, ever receive a single centavo."

He said he did what he did "to make our athletes preparing for the SEA Games here this November feel we will always be by their side, that their welfare will always be in our mind."

The First Gentleman said that if the country "would win 120 of the 395 or so gold medals staked in November, we might yet emerge overall champions."

The country won 48 gold medals to place fourth overall in Vietnam in 2003, when the friends of the First Gentleman shelled out P22 million in support of our athletes.

"Actually, a good showing in the SEA Games could just be the start of something big for Philippine sports," he said. "There is the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, next year. And then in 2008, the Beijing Olympics. The first Olympic gold medal has always been the ultimate dream of every Filipino. We will never stop chasing that dream."

I'm with you there, Sir. But, honestly, until now, I am still as surprised as Valentin Dakuykoy—pleasantly, that is, like VD—at the amount you had generated for our athletes' training for the SEA Games. Gosh! A hundred and fifty million pesos! In just half a day at that! With San Miguel Corporation tossing in P100 million!

Who said Mike Arroyo was lacking in friends, if not credibility?

Did it take you nights to conceptualize the project, Sir?

"No, not really," he said. "It took me only about a week to finalize the idea," he said. "I never realized I've got so many friends out there *pala*, all willing to help in our noble project for the good of Philippine sports."

Upon hearing that, I extended my hand for the congratulatory handshake. And, with the interview over, he set out for the golf course. But before he could step on the gas, I said to him: "Good luck, Sir. Hope you play well today."

"Oh, that," the First Gentleman said, breaking into a smile. "Golf to me is for enjoyment. I am just here to relax, savor the breeze, to be with you guys. Thank you, again."

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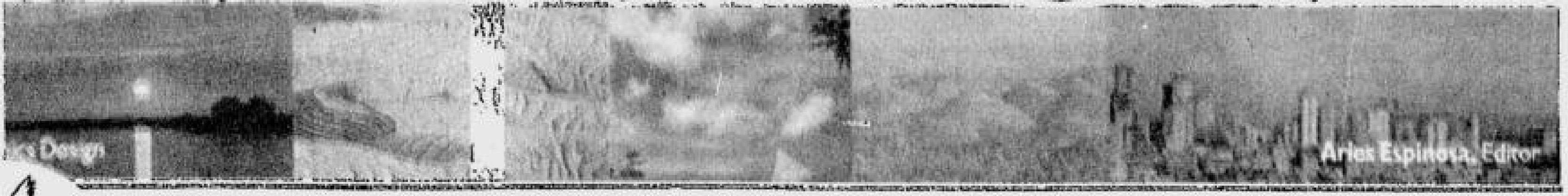

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A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

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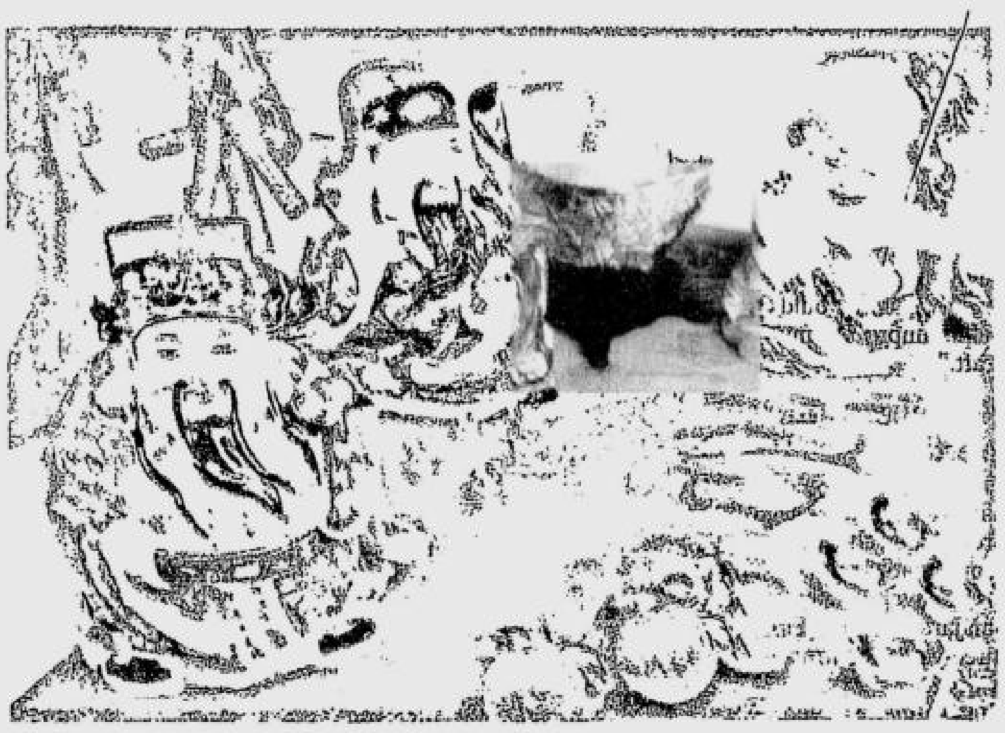
Events to crow about at New World Renaissance Hotel

THE NEW WORLD Renaissance Hotel grandly ushers in the Year of the Rooster with a lineup of festive offerings as its way of saying "Kung Hei Fat Choi". Guests are welcomed to the hotel by Chinese lanterns and impressive décor at the lobby. On Chinese New Year's Day itself on Feb. 9, a fantastic Lion and Dragon Dance by the reputable Ling Nam Athletic Association, starts at the lobby and makes its way to all the hotel's restaurants, specially Emperor Court, at 1 p.m.

Emperor Court goes on full gear as it offers an extra-special Chinese New Year's Menu full of festive fare for groups and individuals available for lunch and dinner from Jan. 31 until Feb. 23. Chinese executive chef Ken Chiu and his team display their culinary prowess with dishes offered in this menu such as: Deep-Fried Prawns in Mayonnaise accompanied by Sweetened Walnuts, Braised Abalone Mushroom with Lettuce in Oyster Sauce, Chinese New Year Salmon Salad, Shark's Fin Soup with Dried Seafood among other mouth-watering selections. For reservations, please call 811-6888.



Strawberry Sensation at The Bellevue Hotel

CALLING all ye suckers for sweets! The Bellevue's Lobby Lounge is presenting yet another of mankind's greatest creations. The delectable, oh-so-succulent, one of a kind Strawberry Sensation cake. No adjectives are enough to describe the richness and perfection of this freshly baked strawberry and cheesecake combination. You will undoubtedly crave for more once this piece of heaven touches your palate.

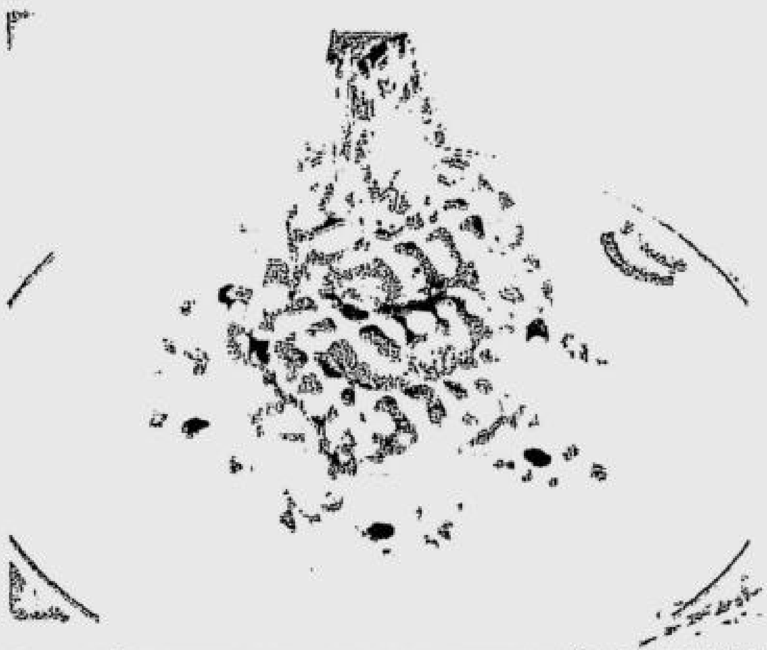
After indulging on that sinfully delicious dessert, what could be better than unwinding at the Bellevue's 20/20 Entertainment Center? With its great music, spacious lounge area, comfy couches and overall relaxing ambiance, this place is the perfect haven for young urban professionals out to have a good time. The best part is, 20/20 is offering a fantastic barkada treat. For every six glasses of draft beer consumed, a pitcher of draft beer is served for free! It's a real steal so what are you waiting for? This promo is available from 8:30 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

Astoria Plaza celebrates the Year of the Rooster

CELEBRATE the Lunar Year of the Green Wood Rooster at the Astoria Plaza! Treat your family and friends to an authentic Chinese lunch buffet at the Café Astoria for only P520++ per person. A lunch buffet receipt worth at least P1,500 entitles you to a free exciting computerized feng shui and Chinese geomancy forecast.

Check in a 1-bedroom suite for only P2,750++ and a 2-bedroom suite for P3,950++. Special Lunar New Year room rates are inclusive of buffet breakfast, complimentary bottled mineral water, roundtrip shuttle service to nearby malls and free use of the gym and the pool. Astoria Plaza's Chinese New Year Room Promo is valid from Feb. 7 to 9.

For inquiries and reservations please visit or call telephone number (02)687-1111.



World-class fiesta experience at Dusit

ENJOY Dusit Hotel Nikko's Fiesta San Miguel's wide selections of mouth watering authentic Filipino recipes such as "Inihaw na Tadyang ng Baka," "Boneless Crispy Pata," "Kilawin Tanguingues," "Laing" and more!

After that savoury course, get a taste of delightful Filipino desserts that will truly complete your meal. Try the restaurant's homemade flavored ice creams like Mais con quezo, mango crunch and choc-nut, the Halo-Halo Espesyal with concoctions of sweetened fruits and pulses topped with ube ice cream.

Or if you're in for a drink, try Fiesta San Miguel's "Happy Hour" promo - Drink all you can of freshly brewed San Miguel Beer valued for only P300 ++, which starts from 5:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. only.

Fiesta San Miguel is open for lunch from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. For inquiries please contact 867-3333 extension 3308.

THE EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL'S NEW YEAR BLOW-OUT
The Executive Plaza Hotel offers an affordable rate of P1,900 nett with breakfast, for single/ double or twin occupancy. This promo is for local residents and balikbayans only. For reservations and inquiries please call 525-8969 or at 523-1000 locals 304 - 308. The Executive Plaza Hotel is located at 1630 A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila.

Waterfront's January delights

WATERFRONT Airport Hotel and Casino Mactan starts the year right as it bares their January delights.

Cake of the Month

Prune and Peanut Butter Cake

Have a bite of this moist, fruity and nutty blend of sun-ripe prunes and peanuts, ideal for coffee or just simply a tempting indulgence. P1,600++ (one whole) P160++ (slice) . Available at the Lobby Lounge from Jan. 1 to 31.

Cocktail of the Month

Piña Colada

Taste this refreshing cocktail with fresh pineapple juice and young cocunut milk blended with fine spirits. P220++ per glass in all outlets , P250++ per glass for room service.

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Why Sandara's leaving RP

From page A30

Quest, the Korean girl's schedule became booked solid until this month.

"Right now, it's impossible to talk to her because she's shooting in a very remote location," Dylim said, adding that Sandara has to finish some loose ends before flying to Korea.

"Also, Sandara is always misquoted and misinterpreted, so she chose to just write an e-mail," Dylim explained.

Sandara, who was on the brink of graduating from high school when "SCQ" claimed her, would be taking up a development course in Korea, according to her handlers. The course would hopefully develop her skills in singing and acting, the lack of which were sore points among SCQ followers who were rooting for Neri Naiig.

"I have to think of my future," Sandara said in her e-mail, referring to why she is leaving show biz to study. "I love what I have been doing—singing, dancing, acting—and I believe that my studies in Korea would help improve my craft."

No doubts, questions

Dylim said Sandara wants to improve herself and prove that she's not just a novelty. Before Sandara signed her three-year contract with ABS-CBN, she had already told management that she would be going back to Korea to study, according to Dylim.

"That's why she was allowed to go," said Dylim. "Sandara also knows that ABS-CBN would continue to support her when she returns."

If everything goes on schedule, Sandara would only be gone from Philippine show biz for five months.

"Before I leave, I want to clear all the things that (have) happened in the past year," the e-mail said. "I don't want to leave you guys with any doubts and questions in your head. When I take some time off in March to study in Korea, hopefully you guys will understand the reason for my leave. I am also saddened to be taking a vacation so soon...also leaving my love team with Hero behind.

"I want to thank you all for your undying support [for] me and my partnership with Hero," Sandara's e-mail said. "Without you, I would not be where I am today. I hope that you guys [would] still be there to support me again when I return after my short leave.

"The Philippines is where I became popular and I will never forget you.

"Always remember, *mahal ko kayo* [I love you]."

Phenomenon

Sandara became a phenomenal success on "Star Circle Quest" last year, where she emerged as one of the top five questors with half a million text votes. She edged out from competition the more talented Neri, who was voted out of the race by a hairline lead.

Since then, Sandara has become one of the network's A-listers, despite her B-rated talents. She hosts the Koreanovela series "Sandara's Romance" and "SCQ (Star Circle Quest). Reload."

The success of her first movie, "Bcuz Of You," under Star Cinema, certified her team-up with Hero as a precursor of the future of local entertainment: wholesome show biz couples targetted at the tweener market.

Sandara has also pitched consumer products, from shampoos to sanitary napkins, on TV commercials and has been named one of the People of the Year, alongside Sen. Miriam Santiago and broadcaster Korina Sanchez.

But like most success stories that could not be explained by market statistics and rational thought—ABS-CBN's Deo Edrinal tried to pass it off as charisma—Sandara's sparkle has continued to attract countless detractors who continue to poke fun at her.

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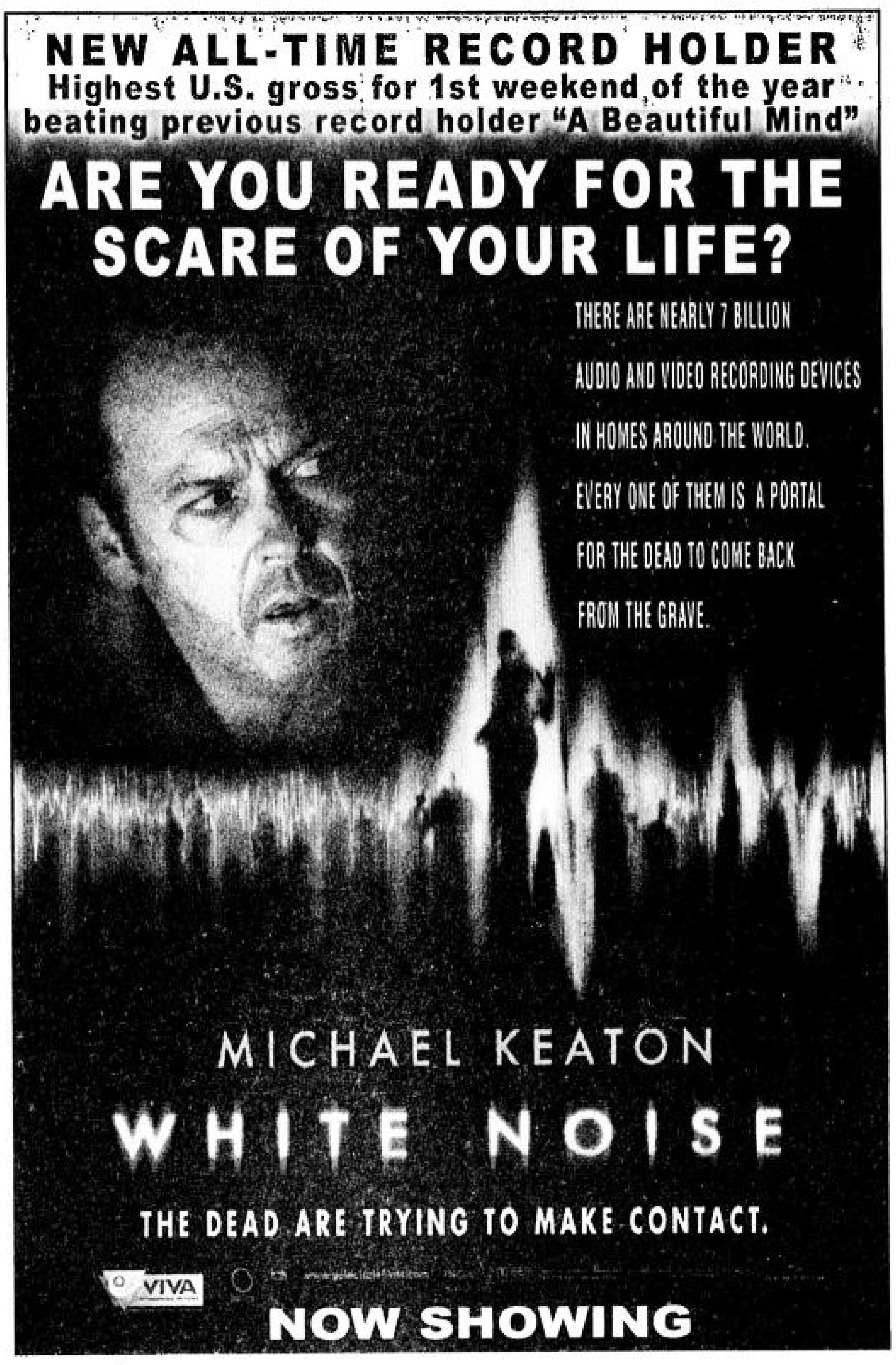
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ARE YOU READY FOR THE SCARE OF YOUR LIFE?
THERE ARE NEARLY 7 BILLION AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING DEVICES IN HOMES AROUND THE WORLD.
EVERY ONE OF THEM IS A PORTAL FOR THE DEAD TO COME BACK FROM THE GRAVE.
MICHAEL KEATON
WHITE NOISE
THE DEAD ARE TRYING TO MAKE CONTACT.
VIVA
NOW SHOWING

WHITE NOISE MAKES BOX OFFICE HISTORY

Electronic Voice Phenomenon (EVP) found a large audience this weekend at the North American Box Office when White Noise opened with an impressive $24.1 million. Per Daily Variety, the film's gross was the most ever taken in by a film debuting on the first weekend of the year -- well above the previous record holder, A Beautful Mind. White Noise's impressive tally makes it the fourth biggest opening weekend for films debuting or expanding nationally in January behind Star Wars – Special Edition in 1997 ($35. 9 million), 2002's Black Hawk Down ($28.6 million) and last year's Along Came Polly ($27.7 million). White Noise also beat Alexander at the box office when both films made their U.K. debut

White Noise stars Michael Keaton as architect Jonathan Rivers who is mourning the sudden and mysterious death of his beloved wife. Rivers considers himself a decent, rational man who would not subscribe to any theories about making contact with those in the afterlife. But a stranger, Raymond Price (Ian McNeice) claims that he heard Jonathan's wife, Anna (Chandra West) through EVP - the process by which the dead, through sound and image, communicate with the living through static and white noise of modern electronic devices. Fueled by his grief, Jonathan finds himself swayed by Raymond's claims, supported by recordings of Anna. He successfully captures a recording of Anna's voice and image with a compeling message for him. In his growing obsession with reaching Anna, Jonathan fails to notice signs of impending danger, summed up by Raymond's assessment of the souls who cross the divide from the other side: "They can't all be nice."

White Noise opens on Jan. 19, released by Viva International Pictures.

VIVA
ADVT.

MTRCB R-13
NOW SHOWING
IMAGES OF PURE EVIL THAT WILL HAUNT YOU FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIVES.
From the same company that gave you "THE GRUDGE"
THE HOUSE WHERE EVIL DWELLS
MADHOUSE

A PRE-VALENTINE OFFERING
OPENS JAN. 26
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
CHILDREN BELOW 13 YRS. OLD WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED IF ACCOMPANIED BY PARENT OR ADULT
When two people separated by time and distance risk their lives to be with each other... what could it be?
JOAQUIN PHOENIX / CLAIRE DANES and SEAN PENN
IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
Distributed by Solar Entertainment Corporation

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ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Louie C. Camino**
Assistant Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

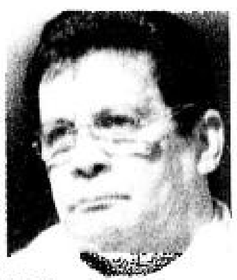
'FPJ sightings' in Aceh reported by foreigner

ONE James Aberdeen II, who says he's from Sumatra Island, Indonesia, has this piece of astonishing news that he has been e-mailing to Filipinos: "Fernando Poe Jr. seen alive in Aceh."

He says two witnesses reported seeing the actor "helping out the victims of the tsunami that hit the island" on Dec. 26.

FPJ died on Dec. 14 after a massive stroke. Thousands viewed his body during the wake at the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City before he was buried on Dec. 22.

The e-mail from Sumatra says the two witnesses recognized Poe "from an international newspaper that they had read" before the tragedy, which struck several South Asian countries.


POE

The man who calls himself James Aberdeen II reports: "Rumor has it that Poe didn't die in the Philippines, that he was instead given a new identity by the US government to save him from being assassinated by forces in the Philippine government."

His conclusion: "Poe wanted safety for him and his relatives, and at the same time let his wife continue the fight against the government that cheated him in the last elections."

And so four days after his interment, he decided it was safe to be seen in Aceh?

The man who calls himself James Aberdeen II loses steam: "However, some former friends of Poe said the witnesses probably saw the ghost of Poe who, even in death, still wants to help out as many people as he can [sic]."

Still he concludes with a supplication: "Please forward this to the Filipino people that their hero is alive and well."

Ya, sure.

Why Sandara's leaving RP

By Nini Valera

SHOW STOPPER

"CONTINUE to support Hero (Angeles) and his new projects. And if he is paired with someone new while I'm gone, support them, too, because his success is also my success."

Sandara Park made this appeal in an e-mail that is now going around cyberspace, in which the Korean teen idol also announced she was leaving local show biz and the Philippines to study in Korea.

Addressed to her friends, the e-mail was meant to clear muddled issues among Sandara and the two boys being paired with her: fellow Star Circle Questors Hero Angeles and Joseph Bitagcol.

DEFENDER. "I don't like it when my friends get hurt, that's why I defended Joseph," says the Korean doll. "If the same thing happens to Hero, I'd do that, too."

Sandara's e-mail said: "I know I have said and done things that you didn't like. And I'm sorry if I hurt some of you. It's just that sometimes I have a hard time expressing myself. I don't like it when my friends get hurt, and at the expense of another friend, too. That's why I defended Joseph. He has no one to protect him. *Kawawa naman siya*—he gets bad-mouthed all because of me.

"*Kaya* the more he gets down, the more I fight back. Friend *ko kasi siya eh*. Wouldn't you do the same for a friend? If the same thing happens to Hero I'd do that, too. It's the bond that we have—us 10 questors—like a real family."

In remote location

Sandara wrote the e-mail, which was also sent to INQUIRER Entertainment, in lieu of press interviews, which she cannot give because of a hectic schedule prior to her departure in March, according to Rikka Dylim, promotions and publicity manager of ABS-CBN's Star Magic.

Dylim said that after Sandara won in Star

WHY/ A29

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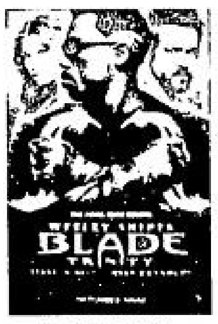
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KUNG FU HUSTLE
MTRCB RATING: PG13
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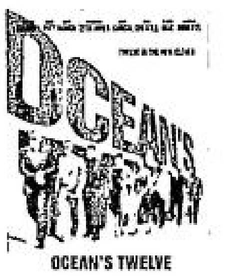
OCEAN'S TWELVE
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LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 WHITE NOISE
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 BLADE TRINITY
5 UNO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city baguio
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 ONE MISSED CALL
3 2046
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city batangas
1 HONEY
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 HELLWOLF

sm city marilao
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE
3 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city bacoor
1 UNO
2 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
3 MAD HOUSE
4 NATIONAL TREASURE
5 BLADE TRINITY
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE
7 RAISE YOUR VOICE
8 OCEAN'S TWELVE

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4 WHITE NOISE
5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
6 NED KELLY
7 DARKNESS
8 BLADE TRINITY

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2 RESERVED
3 HELLWOLF
4 OUT OF REACH
5 OCEAN'S TWELVE
6 BLADE TRINITY
7 RESERVED
8 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

sm city davao
1 KUNG FU HUSLTE
2 NANGHAK
3 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
4 BLADE TRINITY
5 2046
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city cagayan de oro
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 DARKNESS
3 WIMBLEDON
4 BLADE TRINITY

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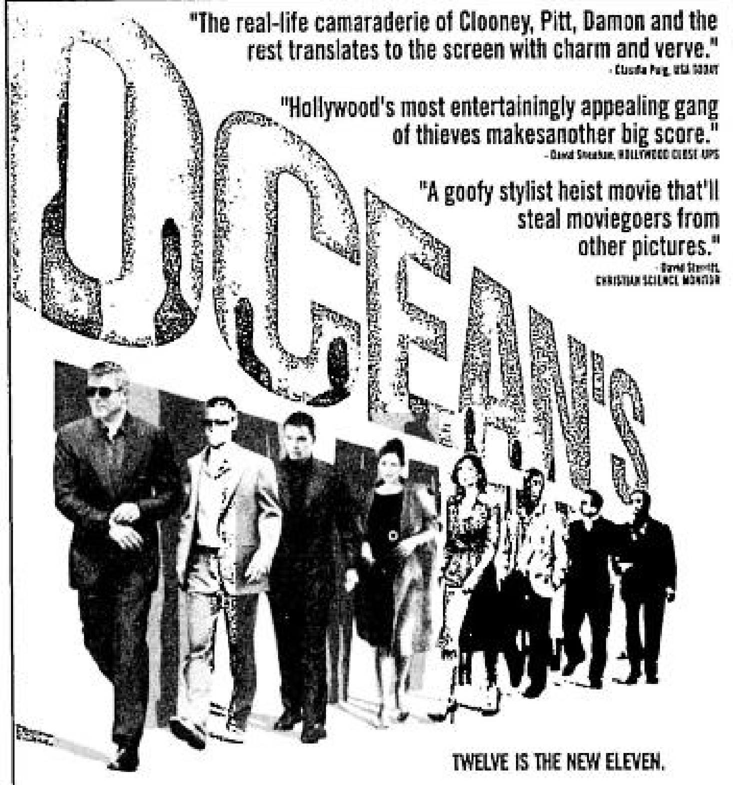
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
"'OCEAN'S TWELVE' IS THE BEST ENSEMBLE FILM OF THE YEAR."
- Paul Clinton, CNN.com


"The real-life camaraderie of Clooney, Pitt, Damon and the rest translates to the screen with charm and verve."
- Claudia Puig, USA TODAY
"Hollywood's most entertainingly appealing gang of thieves makesanother big score."
- David Sheehan, HOLLYWOOD CLOSE-UPS
"A goofy stylist heist movie that'll steal moviegoers from other pictures."
- David Sterritt, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
TWELVE IS THE NEW ELEVEN.
GEORGE CLOONEY | BRAD PITT | MATT DAMON | CATHERINE ZETA-JONES | ANDY GARCIA | DON CHEADLE | BERNIE MAC | AND JULIA ROBERTS
OCEAN'S TWELVE

MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP OPENS FEBRUARY 2

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "AMÉLIE"

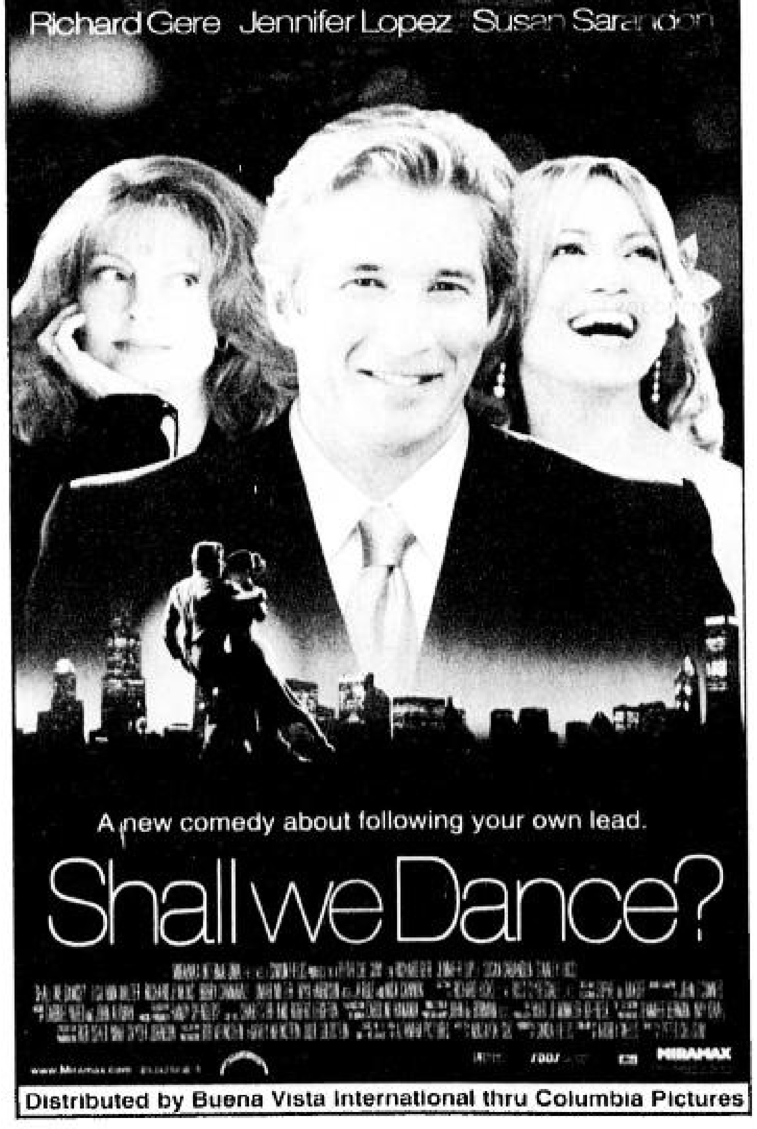
As World War 1 draws to an end, a young French woman's greatest fight is about to begin. Mathilde receives word that her fiancé, Manech, is one of five soldiers who have been court-martialed and pushed out of an Allied trench into no-man's land... and most certain death.

If Manech were dead, Mathilde would know.

Summoning the courage, will and strength that only love can inspire, she embarks on an extraordinary journey to uncover the fate of her lover. What follows is an investigation into the absurdity of war, the beauty of hope and the tenacity of the human spirit.

AUDREY TAUTOU
A FILM BY JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET
A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

OPENS FEBRUARY 2!
MTRCB RATING ▶ G ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED


Richard Gere Jennifer Lopez Susan Sarandon
A new comedy about following your own lead.
Shall we Dance?
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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FRIDAY,
JANUARY 21, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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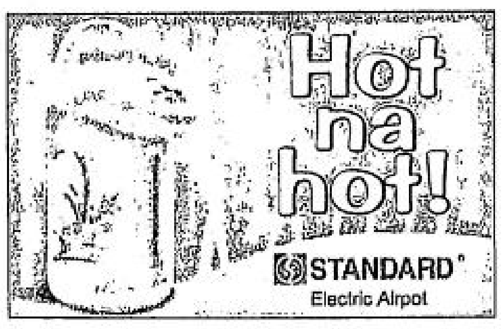


Angel Locsin cried herself to sleep grieving at the memorial park

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor

ANGEL Locsin was so affected by the death of her boyfriend Miko Sotto in December 2003 that she could have tried drugs or quit show business if breaks hadn't come her way.

"I visited Miko's grave at the Loyola memorial park in Parañaque and cried until I fell asleep," recalled Angel, speaking in Filipino. "I felt secure there because he was like my bodyguard when he was still alive. And the guards already knew me so I wasn't scared to spend the night in the memorial park."

On Dec. 29, 2003, Miko fell to his death from his ninth-floor condominium unit in Mandaluyong City. He was the second of the two sons of actress-host Ali Sotto and her ex-husband Maru, a brother of former senator Tito Sotto and comedian and TV host Vic.

Angel said Miko was his second boyfriend and they had been dating for six months when tragedy struck. She said that although it was difficult (she still keeps pictures of his late boyfriend in her place and talks about him with other young men interested in her), she soon realized she had to move on.

"It was perfect timing that the good breaks soon came my way," the young actress said. "If I didn't become busy with work, I would have tried taking drugs or just quit show business."

Angel—real name, Angelica Colmenares—was spotted by an advertising agent when she was 14 years old. After appearing in about nine commercials, she joined Channel 7's teen series, "Click," in April 2002. She also became a part of the old soap, "Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw," and the coming-of-age movie, "Kuya."

No motivation needed

The 19-year-old doe-eyed beauty's lucky streak began when she was chosen to play the female lead of Alwina in Channel 7's "Mulawin," which premiered last Aug. 2. The larger-than-life plotline, colorful avian costumes, passable aerial effects, as well as the parent-child relationship, friendship and romance, got the rapt attention of TV viewers, making it one of the highest rating drama programs on the tube today.

"Mulawin" also launched the popular love team of its lead stars, Angel and heartthrob Richard Gutierrez, who plays Alwina's protector and friend, Aguiluz. In the recent Metro Manila Film Festival, the comely couple headlined the horror flick, "Sigaw," directed by Yam Laranas.

Richard and Angel also lead the cast of "Let the Love Begin," the Valentine offering of GMA Films, whose last project, "Deathrow," was shown four years ago.

In the movie, Angel plays an unhappy rich girl while Richard is an industrious poor boy. Their love connection begins in their high school years but they will only bond romantically years later as young professionals who find their destiny in each other.

During the press conference for "Let the Love Begin" last Sunday night, Angel told INQUIRER Entertainment and a couple of other writers that she didn't need much motivation for the love-struck part of her role because she already liked her leading man in the first place.

"He's very humble, hardworking and responsible," she said of Richard, who turns 21 today. "I used to think he was an airhead just because he's the son of actors Eddie Gutierrez and Annabel Rama, but he turned out be a simple and down-to-earth person. I feel like a princess on the set because he's very caring. He really cares for his co-workers"

Roses in her car

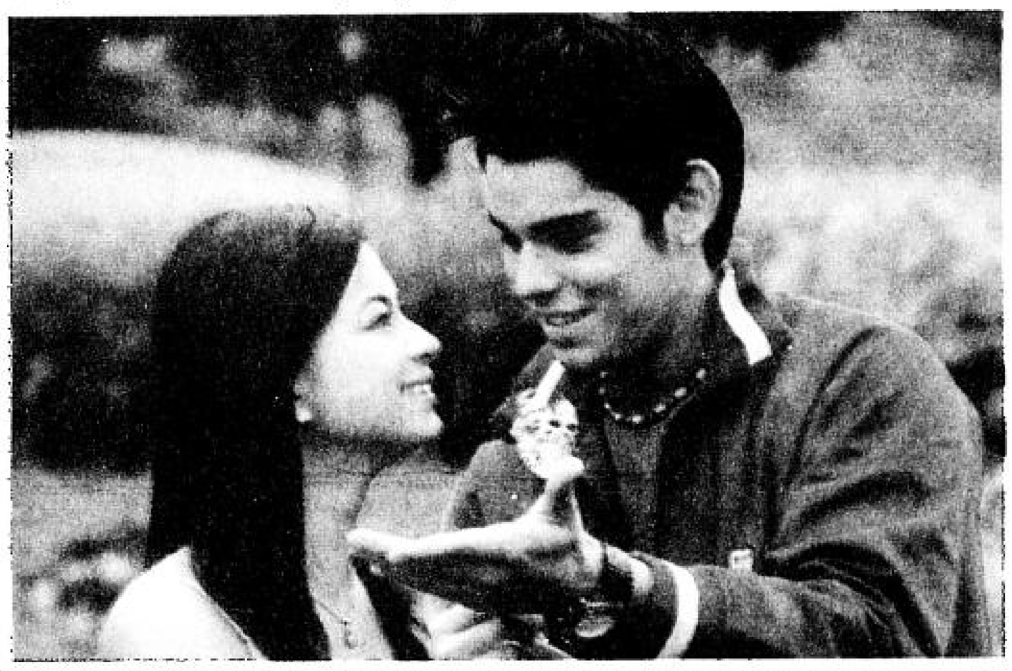
Richard, who was previously linked with Filipino-Australian Anne Curtis, can also be romantic. Angel related that after one of their "Mulawin" tapings, he surprised her with a bunch of white, long-stemmed roses in her car.

"He probably got fond of me," she said, downplaying the amorous undertone of the gesture. "I have this special friendship with Richard. I like him but I don't think of him as a prospective boyfriend."

With a little nudge, she obliged with a near-confession: "Yes, there's a possibility of us falling in love with each other. We have genuine care and feelings for each other. But we feel awkward to talk about it. For instance, when we appeared as guests on a talk show and we were asked to act sweet, we got self-conscious. We also don't discuss how to do a romantic scene."

Angel said she has known Richard for three years now. They worked together for two years on "Click," where they played siblings. She was then being paired with Railey Valeroso and he with Chynna Ortaleza.

They may find new love team partners when "Mulawin" wraps up in March, with Angel reportedly being eyed to play the lead of the "Darna" series. But just like Alwina and Aguiluz, they would remain faithful to each other, she said.


"SPECIAL FRIENDS." "I like him but I don't think of him as a prospective boyfriend," Angel says of his "Let the Love Begin" co-star Richard.

DRUGS OR BREAKS. She could have resorted to drugs if the good breaks hadn't come along, admits Angel.

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JAN. 22 • Saturday • 8pm

Sharon's inspiring generosity

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

TRUST **Sharon Cuneta** to celebrate her birthday in a more meaningful way than the usual stellar candle-blowing, gift-opening and over-the-top litany of messages of love and praise from fellow luminaries.

Last Saturday, Sharon eschewed most of that and instead celebrated her birthday on Channel 2 by fulfilling the wishes of some lucky letter-senders, to the tune of one wish for each of her 39 years (Part Two will be telecast this Saturday).

Like other viewers, we were a bit thrown off to see that Sharon had gained so much weight after the birth of her third daughter Miel, some months back. But we ordered ourselves to get over our initial surprise as soon as possible, so we could more properly and productively focus on the evening's wish-fulfillment thrust.

As the beneficiaries of Sharon's generosity sequentially appeared on the show, we were struck by the extreme poverty that some of them had to endure. Consequently, we hoped that Sharon was also struck by that, and would take steps to make her gift-giving more than just a once-a-year endeavor.

We liked the fact that Sharon didn't hog the charity limelight, and got some of her friends to contribute to the special show's wish-fulfillment effort.

Like Sharon, the other celebrity donors were visibly moved to see their benefactors' great need. We trust that they, too, will take their cue from this, and strive to be generous on a more regular basis.

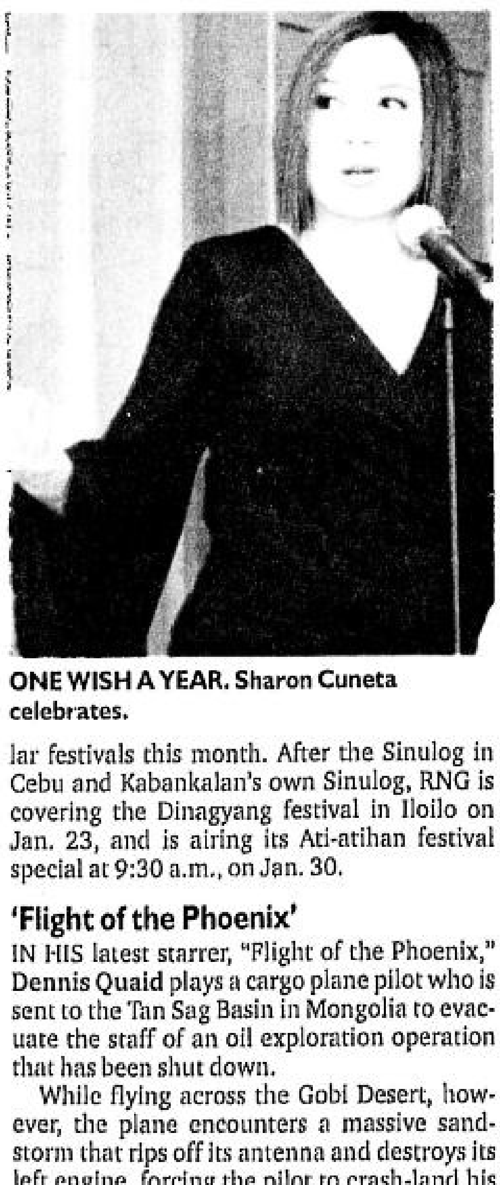
Sharon's co-hosts were **Piolo Pascual** and **Jericho Rosales**. Jericho proved to be a better co-host because he briskly kept his patter and other reactions going, while Piolo more taciturnly stuck to his scripted spiels, thus coming off as relatively lacking in warmth and spontaneity.

As last Saturday's show ended, we hoped that Sharon and her celebrity friends had inspired viewers to also share their blessings with the least of their brethren.

All in all, Sharon's wish-fulfillment and gift-giving initiatives last Saturday provided a sterling example of how celebrity can be used for goals more substantial and inspiring than mere diversion. We trust that the lesson isn't lost on the entertainment industry and its audience.

Festivals on ABS-CBN

ABS-CBN's Regional Network Group (RNG) is covering some of the country's most spectacular festivals this month. After the Sinulog in Cebu and Kabankalan's own Sinulog, RNG is covering the Dinagyang festival in Iloilo on Jan. 23, and is airing its Ati-atihan festival special at 9:30 a.m., on Jan. 30.


ONE WISH A YEAR. Sharon Cuneta celebrates.

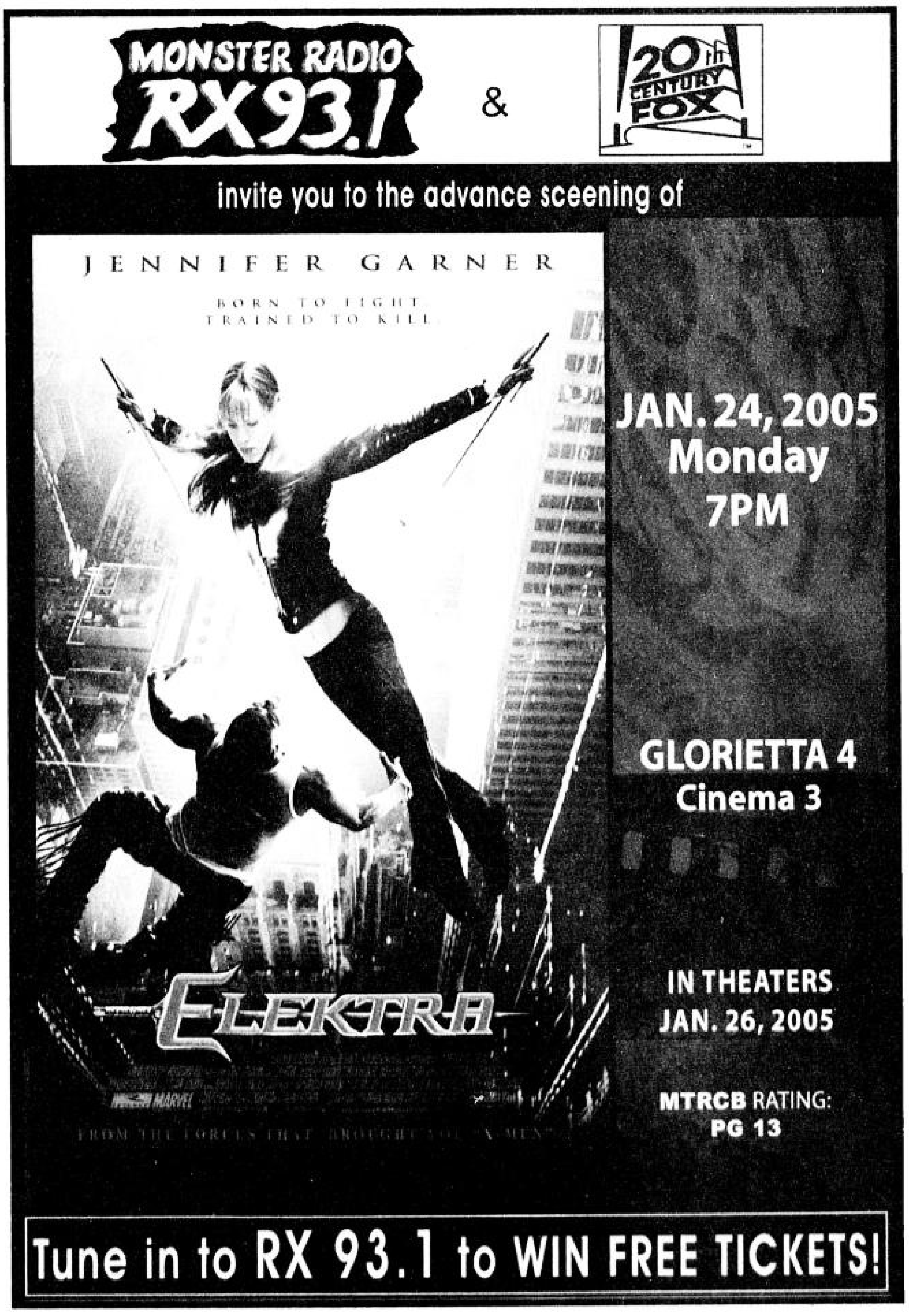
'Flight of the Phoenix'

IN HIS latest starrer, "Flight of the Phoenix," **Dennis Quaid** plays a cargo plane pilot who is sent to the Tan Sag Basin in Mongolia to evacuate the staff of an oil exploration operation that has been shut down.

While flying across the Gobi Desert, however, the plane encounters a massive sandstorm that rips off its antenna and destroys its left engine, forcing the pilot to crash-land his plane in the middle of the desert—in the middle of July.

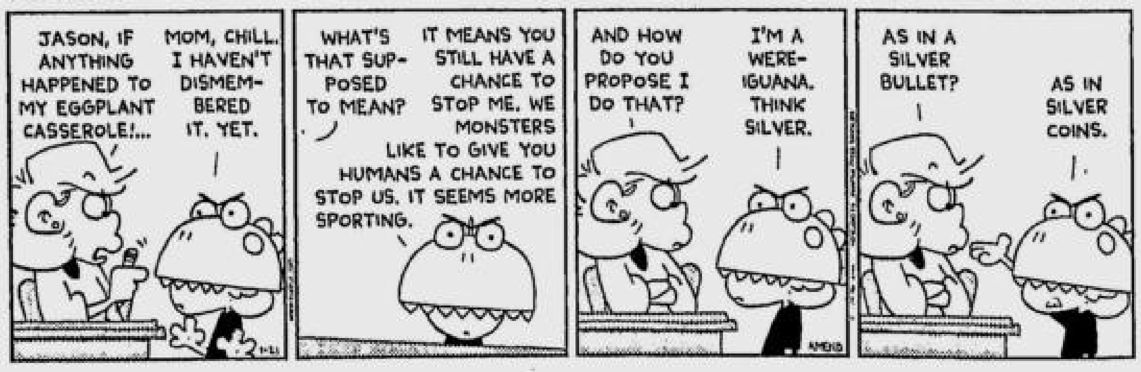
"Flight of the Phoenix" is a remake of Robert Aldrich's exceptional 1965 film, which had the same title. It is produced by the origi-

SHARON'S/ A3



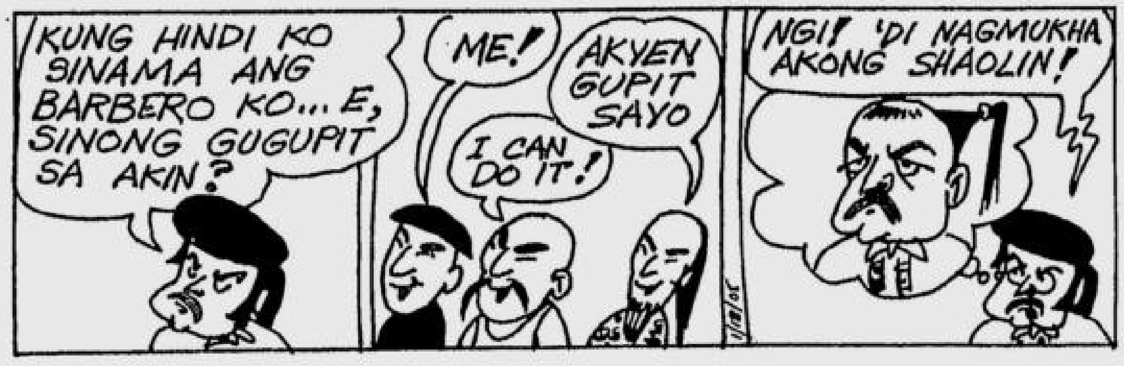
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


JASON, IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO MY EGGPLANT CASSEROLE!...
MOM, CHILL. I HAVEN'T DISMEMBERED IT. YET.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
IT MEANS YOU STILL HAVE A CHANCE TO STOP ME. WE MONSTERS LIKE TO GIVE YOU HUMANS A CHANCE TO STOP US. IT SEEMS MORE SPORTING.
AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE I DO THAT?
I'M A WERE-IGUANA. THINK SILVER.
AS IN A SILVER BULLET?
AS IN SILVER COINS.
AMEND

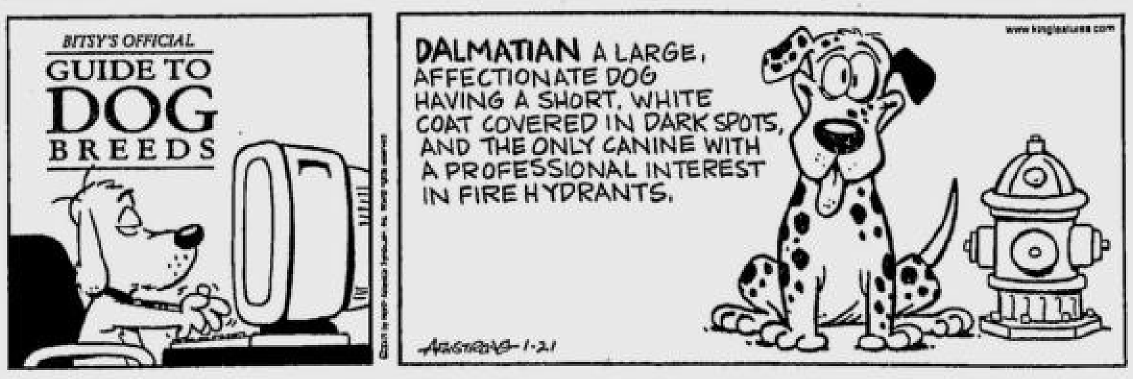
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KUNG HINDI KO SINAMA ANG BARBERO KO... E, SINONG GUGUPIT SA AKIN?
ME!
I CAN DO IT!
AKYEN GUPIT SAYO
NGI! 'DI NAGMUKHA AKONG SHAOLIN!

MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG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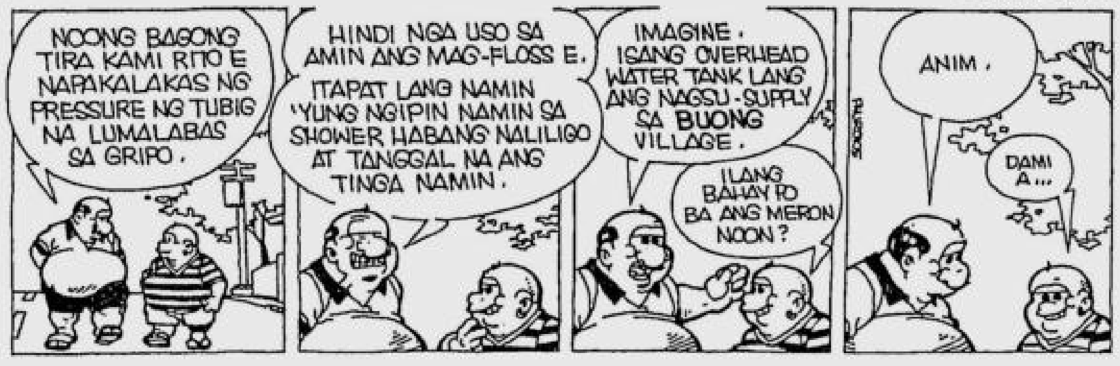
ARMSTRONG 1-21

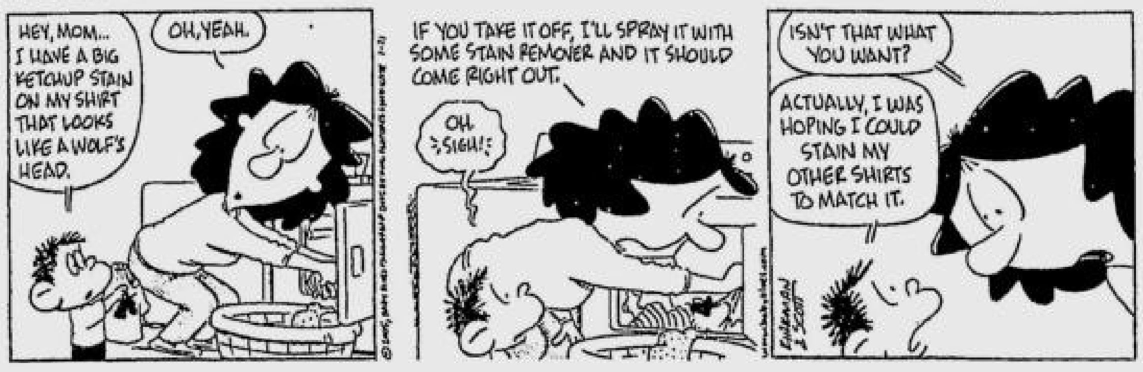
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NOONG BAGONG TIRA KAMI RITO E NAPAKALAKAS NG PRESSURE NG TUBIG NA LUMALABAS SA GRIPO.
HINDI NGA USO SA AMIN ANG MAG-FLOSS E.
ITAPAT LANG NAMIN 'YUNG NGIPIN NAMIN SA SHOWER HABANG NALILIGO AT TANGGAL NA ANG TINGA NAMIN.
IMAGINE, ISANG OVERHEAD WATER TANK LANG ANG NAGSU-SUPPLY SA BUONG VILLAGE.
ILANG BAHAY PO BA ANG MERON NOON?
ANIM.
DAMI A...

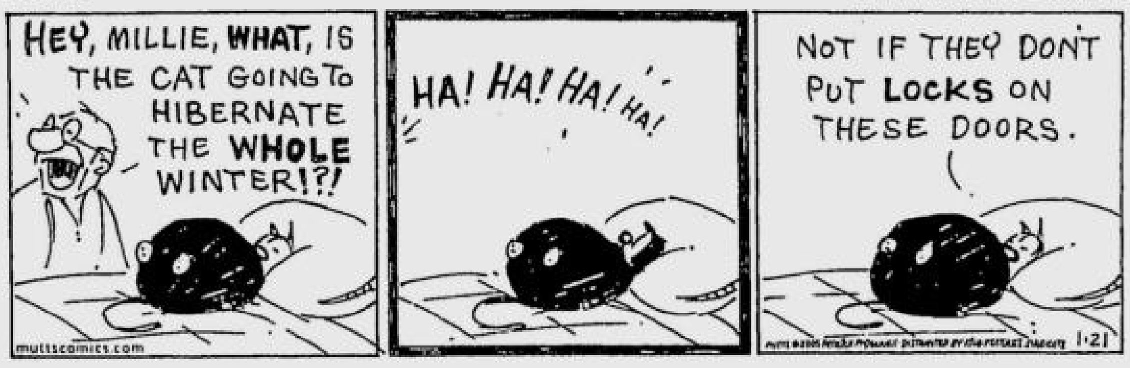
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HEY, MOM... I HAVE A BIG KETCHUP STAIN ON MY SHIRT THAT LOOKS LIKE A WOLF'S HEAD.
OH, YEAH.
IF YOU TAKE IT OFF, I'LL SPRAY IT WITH SOME STAIN REMOVER AND IT SHOULD COME RIGHT OUT.
OH. SIGH!
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
ACTUALLY, I WAS HOPING I COULD STAIN MY OTHER SHIRTS TO MATCH IT.

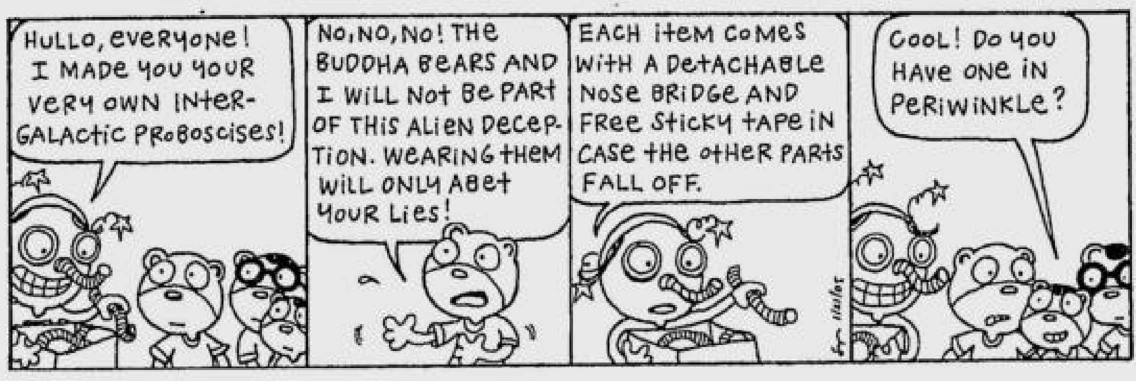
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, MILLIE, WHAT, IS THE CAT GOING TO HIBERNATE THE WHOLE WINTER!?!
HA! HA! HA! HA!
NOT IF THEY DON'T PUT LOCKS ON THESE DOORS.
muttscomics.com
1·21

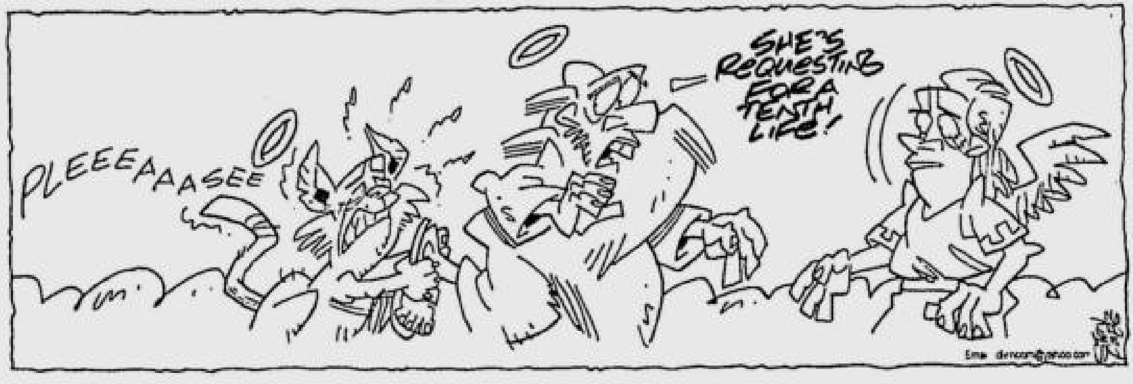
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HULLO, EVERYONE! I MADE YOU YOUR VERY OWN INTER-GALACTIC PROBOSCISES!
NO, NO, NO! THE BUDDHA BEARS AND I WILL NOT BE PART OF THIS ALIEN DECEPTION. WEARING THEM WILL ONLY ABET YOUR LIES!
EACH ITEM COMES WITH A DETACHABLE NOSE BRIDGE AND FREE STICKY TAPE IN CASE THE OTHER PARTS FALL OFF.
COOL! DO YOU HAVE ONE IN PERIWINKLE?

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


PLEEEAAASEE
SHE'S REQUESTING FOR A TENTH LIFE!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are an attractive, colorful character, but you are ambitious because you're serious about your achievements. You often have a "star" quality about you, no matter what you do. You're skilled at dealing with people, and sometimes you're a trend-setter. The year ahead focuses on your closest relationships and partnerships. Some will begin; some will end.
Birthdate of: Hakeem Olajuwon, basketball player; Placido Domingo, tenor; Geena Davis, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Any kind of learning or chance to travel anywhere today will enthuse you enormously. You feel positive, upbeat and ready to enjoy the company of others!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a profitable day for you. Wonderful gifts and goodies can come to you. And yet at the same time, with a generous heart, you're passing on your good fortune to others.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a good day for negotiations and important discussions with partners and clients. People are willing to cooperate with you. You have the golden touch!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Your physical energy is very high today, and no doubt you will enjoy a feeling of good health. Your strong drive can accomplish a lot.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a wonderful day to play, flirt, be creative or just go away for a little vacation. You want to be free to do your own thing. You want to enjoy yourself!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Recent activity and chaos at home have been a bit maddening. Today you have tons of energy to tackle leftover problems and set them right. (Good.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): All your daily activities today seem to be especially bright, positive and friendly. You enjoy the company of others. And others enjoy being with you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a wonderful day for business and financial investments. Whatever you do today can lead to profits in the future. All commerce is favored.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today you have a kind of buoyant optimism that is favorable for success in practically anything. This is a fortunate day for you. Grab the ball and run with it!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel truly charitable to others. You want to do something to help those who are less fortunate. You also know that your generosity begins at home.

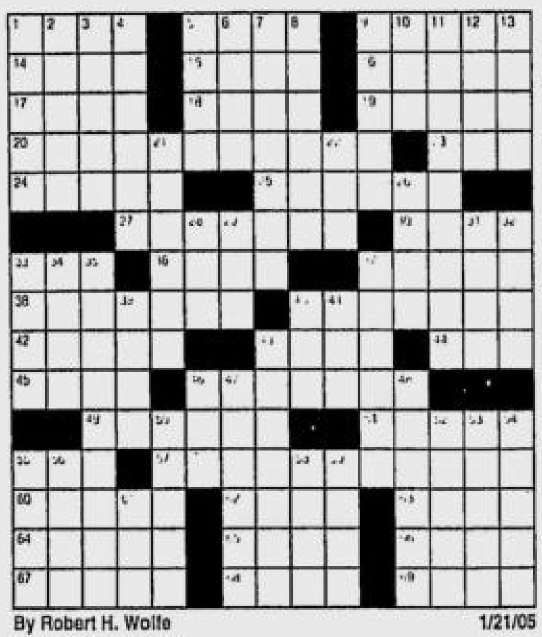
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): For some reason, your objectives and goals are much clearer to you today than usual. You see what you want; and you know that this recognition is the first step in getting it.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a wonderful day to deal with authority figures. They will be completely open to your ideas. The person who is the most surprised is you!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Branch of the Amazon
5 Mary __ Lincoln
9 Character flaw
14 Actor Sharif
15 Grimm creature
16 Mile High Center architect
17 Bear's hangout
18 Thick piece
19 Fertilizer ingredient
20 What the meteorologist was?
23 Prospector's pay dirt
24 Woodland deity
25 Balance
27 Remote station
30 Obstacle
33 In the past
36 Calf front
37 Dodge
38 Wee one
40 Enjoy!
42 Pays to play
43 Protective spray
44 Entry charge
45 Actress Arlene
46 Hangs around
49 "__ Madigan"
51 "Full House" star Bob
55 Bird's beak
57 What the tired kangaroo was?
60 Malkovich film
62 Wash-basin partner
63 Musical tag
64 Soulful Hayes
65 Actress Rowlands
66 Abu Dhabi leader
67 Leave alone
68 Throws in
69 Meets a bet

DOWN
1 Metro terminus?
2 Maytag rival
3 John or Bonnie
4 Dry gulch
5 Nonsense!
6 Eyeball rudely
7 Gets inspiration from
8 Red entries
9 Discovers
10 Pal of Pierre
11 What the tobacco lover was?
12 Lascivious look
13 Become weary
21 Depends on
22 Journalist Hentoff
26 __ of Dogs
28 Vietnamese Nobelist, Le Duc __
29 Cherry stone
31 For two, in music
32 Dancer Kelly
33 Somewhat
34 Ms. Lollobrigida
35 What the musician was?
37 Very
39 Scream
40 Kepi or shako
41 Hotshot
43 Made cat calls
46 Lucy of "Charlie's Angels"
47 Sandinista leader
48 Tasty toppings
50 Give tongue to
52 Pithy saying
53 "Frasier" pooch
54 Russian rulers
55 First name in astronauts
56 Other
58 __ off (repel)
59 Lingerie pieces
61 Grab



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

1/21/05

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

A	L	E	■	C	R	A	B	■	S	T	E	A	M	Y
S	E	A	■	A	E	R	O	■	P	E	A	L	E	D
C	A	T	■	R	A	G	U	■	A	P	R	I	L	S
A	H	E	N	P	R	O	D	U	C	I	N	G	■	■
P	Y	R	O	■	■	N	O	S	E	D	■	N	R	A
■	■	■	S	H	A	N	I	A	■	■	C	M	O	N
A	S	S	■	A	P	E	R	F	E	C	T	E	G	G
C	L	E	A	R	S	■	■	■	T	A	N	N	E	R
H	A	S	A	P	E	R	F	E	C	T	■	T	R	Y
E	T	T	A	■	■	C	E	N	S	O	R	■	■	■
S	T	E	■	A	T	P	A	R	■	■	I	S	P	Y
■	■	R	I	G	H	T	T	O	C	A	C	K	L	E
J	A	C	K	I	E	■	H	U	L	L	■	A	Y	N
F	R	E	E	L	Y	■	E	T	A	T	■	T	E	T
K	I	S	S	E	S	■	R	E	P	O	■	E	R	A

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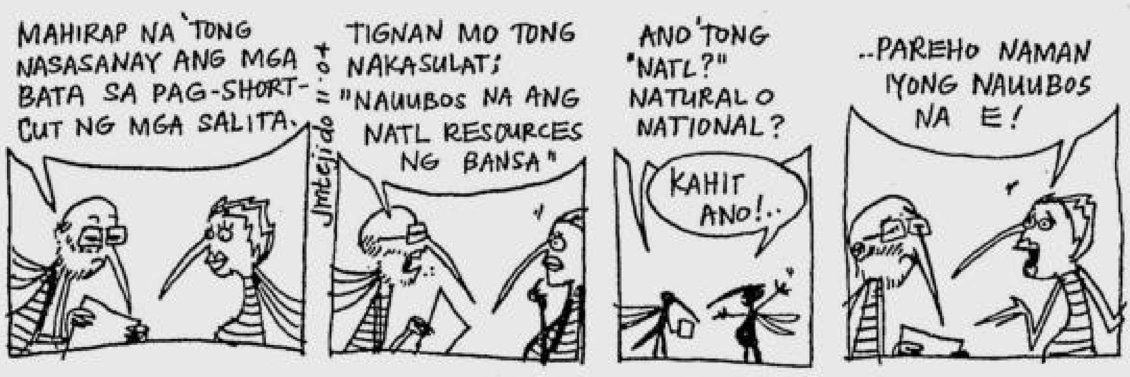
1/21/05

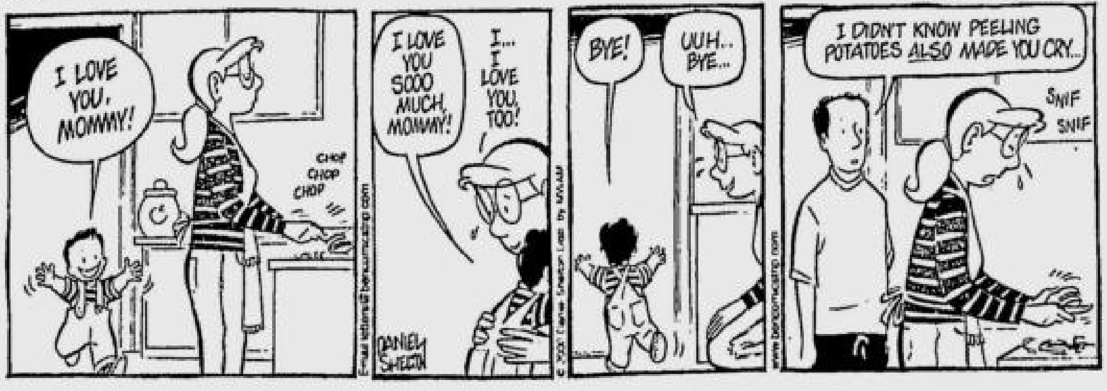
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MAHIRAP NA 'TONG NASASANAY ANG MGA BATA SA PAG-SHORT-CUT NG MGA SALITA.
TIGNAN MO 'TONG NAKASULAT; "NAUUBOS NA ANG NATL RESOURCES NG BANSA"
ANO 'TONG "NATL?" NATURAL O NATIONAL?
KAHIT ANO!..
..PAREHO NAMAN IYONG NAUUBOS NA E!

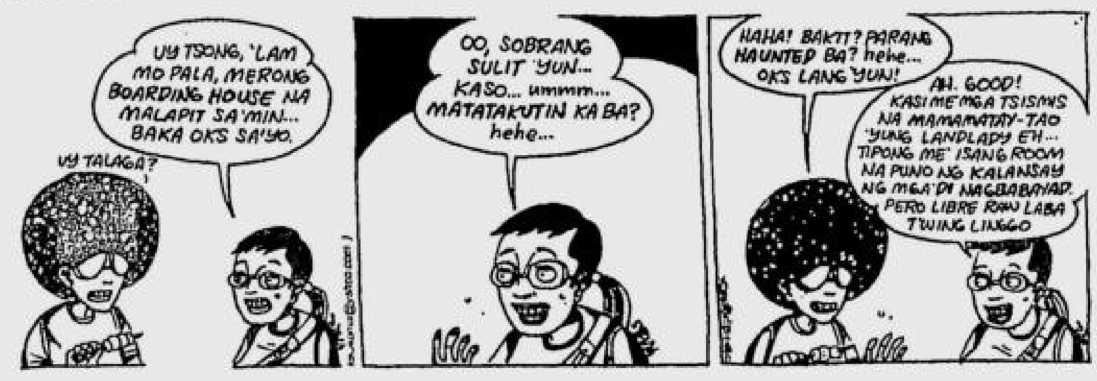
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I LOVE YOU, MOMMY!
CHOP CHOP CHOP
I LOVE YOU SOOO MUCH, MOMMY!
I... I LOVE YOU, TOO!
BYE!
UUH.. BYE...
I DIDN'T KNOW PEELING POTATOES ALSO MADE YOU CRY...
SNIF SNIF

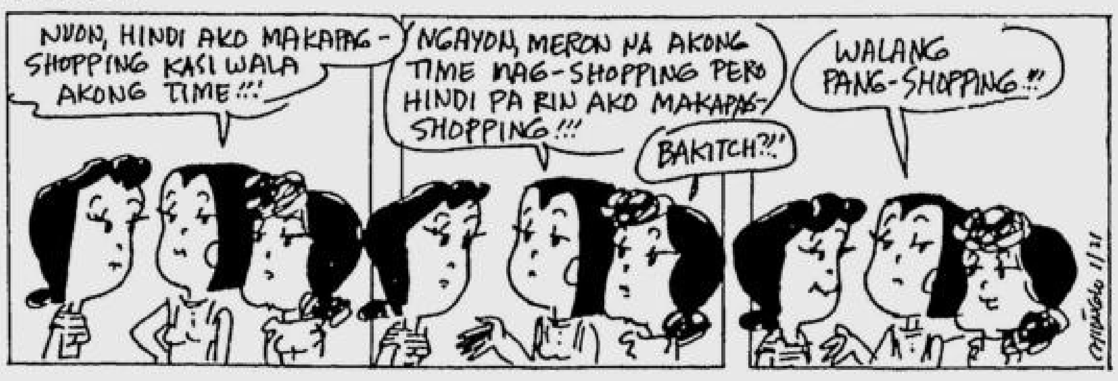
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY TSONG, 'LAM MO PALA, MERONG BOARDING HOUSE NA MALAPIT SA'MIN... BAKA OKS SA'YO.
UY TALAGA?
OO, SOBRANG SULIT 'YUN... KASO... ummm... MATATAKUTIN KA BA? hehe...
HAHA! BAKIT? PARANG HAUNTED BA? hehe... OKS LANG 'YUN!
AH. GOOD! KASI ME MGA TSISMIS NA MAMAMATAY-TAO 'YUNG LANDLADY EH... TIPONG ME' ISANG ROOM NA PUNO NG KALANSAY NG MGA 'DI NAGBABAYAD. PERO LIBRE RAW LABA TWING LINGGO

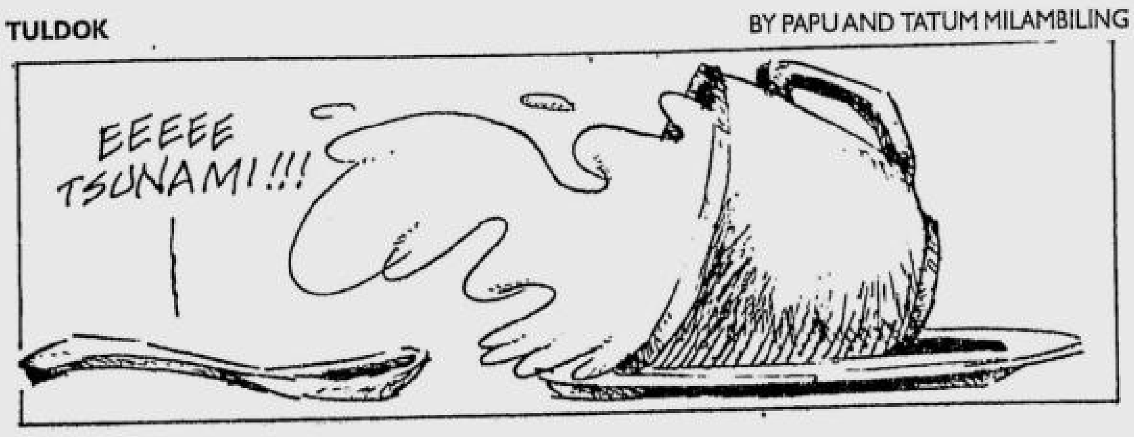
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NUON, HINDI AKO MAKAPAG-SHOPPING KASI WALA AKONG TIME!!!
NGAYON, MERON NA AKONG TIME MAG-SHOPPING PERO HINDI PA RIN AKO MAKAPAG-SHOPPING!!!
BAKITCH?!
WALANG PANG-SHOPPING!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


EEEEE TSUNAMI!!!

Don't blink, lest you miss the scares in 'Wag Kukurap'

IF THE twinbill tales of celebrities' spine-tingling paranormal experiences on "Wag Kukurap" are not scary enough for you, expect a lot more scare as the No. 1 weekend fright show gets even more hair-raising starting this Saturday.

Inspired by the success of featuring celebrities' horrifying encounters with the unknown in its first season, "Wag Kukurap" has officially tied up with the best-selling book series, "True Philippine Ghost Stories," a collection of bloodcurdling horror tales that many people dare not read alone at night.

Hosted by Dingdong Dantes, the second season of "Wag Kukurap" will feature not one or two but four true ghost stories in a faster, more chilling pace that gives viewers more reason to stay glued to their TV screens lest they miss the most startling scenes.

For its season opener this Saturday, "Wag Kukurap" presents the creepy stories of Bloody Mary, the urban legend nobody dares to try; Death Race, a forbidding peek at an ill-fated road in Metro Manila not to be traversed by the weak at heart; and Baby Steps, a heart-stopping encounter with a baby who has returned from the dead to exact revenge.

The new season of "Wag Kukurap" is bound to be a real scare-fest because it will be recounting true ghost stories narrated by Filipinos who actually experienced them, as written in "True Philippine Ghost Stories."

"Wag Kukurap" airs after "Wish Ko Lang" on GMA.

Pinoys familiar with 'Fear Factor' fare

THE FOREIGN reality show "Fear Factor" has rated well here because of the Pinoy's penchant for the grotesque and the unusual.

The show airs on ABC every Monday, 8:30 p.m., after "The Apprentice."

From eating cow brains or Madagascar roaches, to being suspended several feet above the ground or several feet under chilly water, it serves up unusual thrills not unfamiliar to Pinoys. In one episode, contestants had to eat the local delicacy, "*balut*," or boiled duck embryo.

Critics have described the contestants' "tasks" as "inhumane."

But "Fear Factor" producers point out that even host Joe Rogan once ate sheep's eyes.

MADAGASCAR roaches

"It was like a half-cooked egg dipped in ink and snot," he said. "Your body just violently rejects it."

Sharon's inspiring generosity

From page A2-1

nal filmmaker's son, **William Aldrich.**

'Closer'

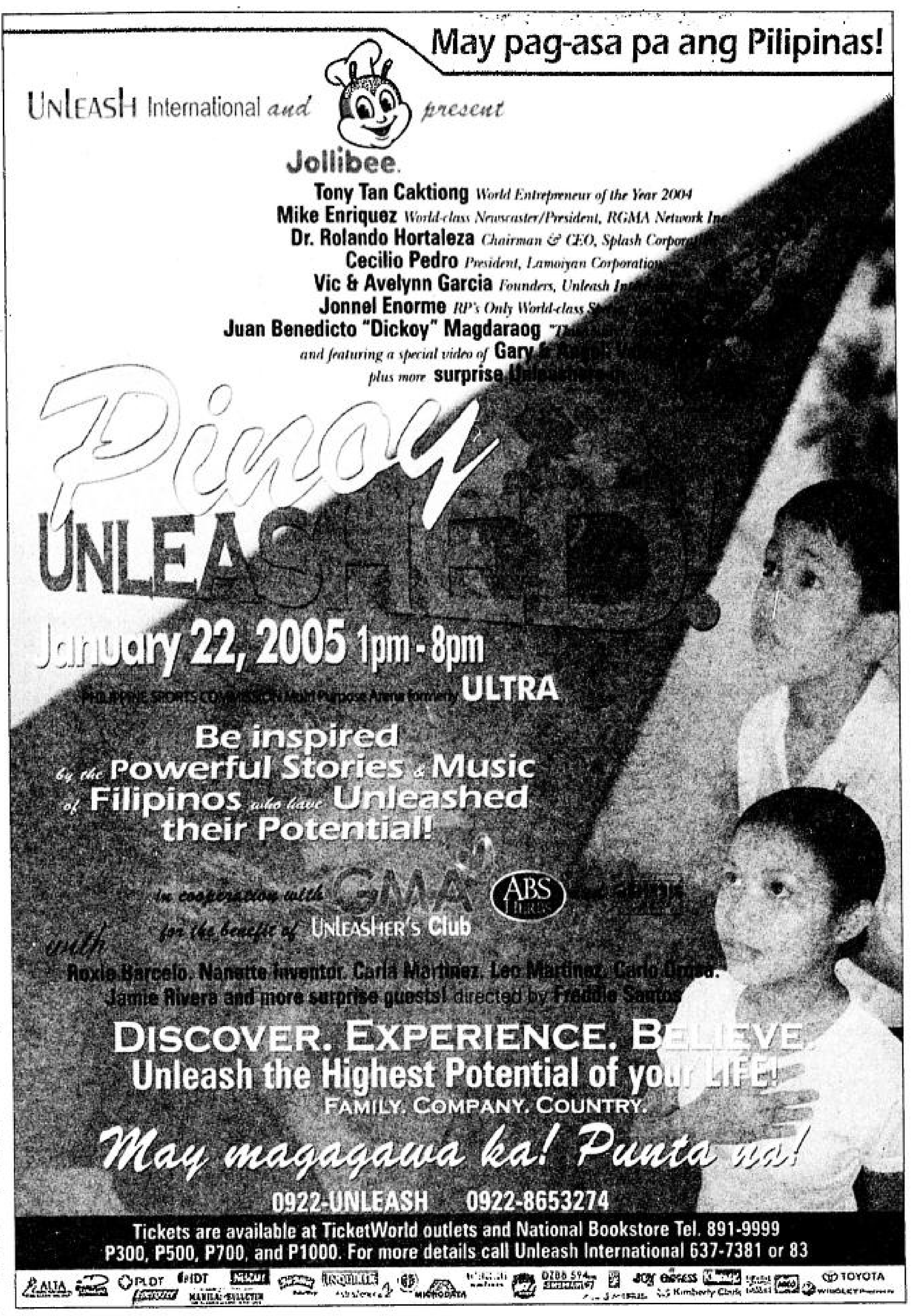
AT THE recent 2004 Golden Globe Awards, two of the stars of "Closer," **Clive Owen** and **Natalie Portman,** won the trophies for best supporting actor and actress, respectively.

This double victory has made "Closer" an even more eagerly anticipated viewing treat for local film buffs. **Mike Nichols'** movie gives viewers a bitingly funny and honest look at modern relationships.

It tells the story of four strangers, their chance meetings, instant attractions and casual betrayals. The film is based on a play by **Patrick Merber** that shows how its lead characters, two men and two women, experience shifts in their interrelationships that take place as a result of the competition between the two men for each of the women at different times.

A formula for marital and extramarital mayhem? Yes, but also the season's hot ticket for film buffs' viewing pleasure-and more awards to come?

"Closer" also stars **Julia Roberts** and **Jude Law.**



May pag-asa pa ang Pilipinas!

UNLEASH International and Jollibee present

Tony Tan Caktiong World Entrepreneur of the Year 2004
Mike Enriquez World-class Newscaster/President, RGMA Network Inc
Dr. Rolando Hortaleza Chairman & CEO, Splash Corpora
Cecilio Pedro President, Lamoiyan Corporatio
Vic & Avelynn Garcia Founders, Unleash In
Jonnel Enorme RP's Only World-class S
Juan Benedicto "Dickoy" Magdaraog
and featuring a special video of Gary
plus more surprise

Pinoy UNLEASHED

January 22, 2005 1pm - 8pm
PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION Multi Purpose Arena formerly ULTRA

Be inspired by the Powerful Stories & Music of Filipinos who have Unleashed their Potential!

in cooperation with GMA ABS
for the benefit of UNLEASHER'S Club

with Roxie Barcelo, Nanette Inventor, Carla Martinez, Leo Martinez, Carlo Orosa, Jamie Rivera and more surprise guests! directed by Freddie Santos

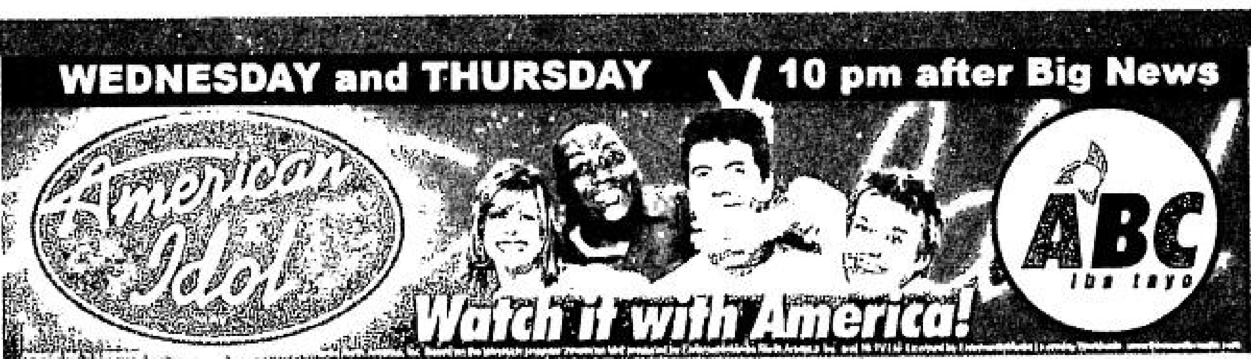
DISCOVER. EXPERIENCE. BELIEVE.
Unleash the Highest Potential of your LIFE!
FAMILY. COMPANY. COUNTRY.

May magagawa ka! Punta na!

0922-UNLEASH 0922-8653274

Tickets are available at TicketWorld outlets and National Bookstore Tel. 891-9999
P300, P500, P700, and P1000. For more details call Unleash International 637-7381 or 83

ALTA PLDT IDT INQUIRER MANILA BULLETIN MICRODATA Kimberly Clark TOYOTA



WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY 10 pm after Big News
American Idol
Watch it with America!
ABC iba tayo

ClickTheCity.com

INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Friday, January 21, 2005

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romance	Get Backers	Ragnarok	Masked Rider Ryuki	TV Patrol	Spirits	Krystala	Lovers In Paris	Hiram	Star Circle National Teen Quest	Star Circle Nat'l Teen Quest Elimin Special			Insider	Private I
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		GSIS Member's Hour		Network Forum		Teledyaryo		World Pool Master				Ugnayang Pambansa	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA Game-Bol	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Secrets	TNA Impact		Billboard On-Air
GMA 7	Leya (2:45 PM)	Joyride (3:15 PM)	Snow Angel (3:45 PM)		One Piece	Witch Hunter Robin	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin	Starstruck (8:45 PM)	Forever In My Heart (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Just For Laughs	Enterprise		Monk		Dead Zone		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
IBC 13		V League				IBC Express Balita		Lifestyle		Retro TV		Global Family Series		D.E.N.R.		Pulis Na Palaban	IBC News Tonite	GMA The Working President	
Solar		WWE Velocity		Thunder Box		Restol	Ozzy & Drix	Mucha Lucha!	Avengers	Deep Space Nine		WWE Smackdown				WWE Velocity		Wow	
Nickelodeon	Dora. The Explorer	Little Bear	Blues Clues	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix		100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd				Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Star MYX	Club MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		What I Like About You	JKX	The Today Show		Starting Over		NBC Nightly News	Entertainment Tonight	Will & Grace	What I Like About You	Iron Chef		Star Search		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Blind Date	Fifth Wheel
Cinema One		Bagong Buwan				Nine Mornings				Slaw			Review Night	Ikaw Lang					
Studio 23								Teen Titans	Justice League	Wuzzup Wuzzup	Spider-Man The Animated Series	Miss Match		Playing It Straight		News Central	The Oprah Winfrey Show	Ticket	Yes Dear
AXN		Jakob The Liar					30 Seconds To Fame	Samurai X	Samurai X	Beastmaster		WRC 2005: Rally XS	Rated X	Cold Squad		Cruel Intentions 2: Manchester Prep			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	TNA Wrestling		Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	When Hidden Cameras Attack/ Weird TV	Ultimate Force		Friends	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic	On Assignment	NG Sea		Weather Gone Mad	Seismic Seconds	The Volcano that Blew the World Away		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wild		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		NG Sea		Weather Gone Mad	Seismic Seconds
Solar Sports		Arthur Gandor Memorial '04			Sounds of the Finals			KOTV Classics		Superstar		In This Corner		NBA Game Cleveland @ Sacramento					GWS ep.58
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Ming's Quest	Revealed With Jules Asner		New York Nick	Guess Who's Coming To Decorate		Road & Track	Back To Basics	Napoleon	
HBO			When In Rome (3:40 PM)			That Championship Season				Superman II (6:55 PM)				Eraser				The Net (10:50PM)	
Star Movies	Man From Elysian Fields (2:45 PM)				Poolhall Junkies			Girls Just Want To Have Fun			Cave In (7:25 PM)			The Princess Diaries				Killing Me Softly (10:55PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	Premiere	Toon Pick	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Zoids: Fuzors	The Looney Tunes Show		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Megas XLR	Aqua Teen (11:15PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh!
ESPN				Big 10 Conf. Iowa vs. Illinois				Goals!	World Snooker Trick Shot Masters '03		Premier Snooker League '04 Crewe, England				Sportscenter Taiwan	Premier Snooker League '04 Crewe, England			
Disney Channel	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Lizzie Mcguire	Even Stevens	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	The Legend Of Tarzan	Lilo & Stitch/Un-talkative Bunny	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax		Accidental Hero				Gold				Mary Shelley's Frankenstein				Cop & 1/2			Tempo (10:35PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Jack				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Agency II		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye		Book Of Ruth			Child Of Our Time (10:35PM)		Agency II (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Power Zone				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Junkyard Wars		Extreme Engineering		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Crime Night	
MTV Philippines		Whatever Things	Non-Stop Hits	Non-Stop Hits		Non-Stop Hits		MTV Get Sported	MTV Loveline	Non-Stop Hits	Non-Stop Hits	MTV Brand New	Be Seen @ MTV	MTV Asia Hitlist		Newlyweds	The Assistant	VH1 Hits/ Video Collection	
Sports Plus			Inside the PGA	Fed Cup finals Match 1 & 2					Porsche md 5&6	World Poker Tour Episode 2				NFL Gameday	Inside the PGA	WTA L.A. Semi-finals			
EWTN	Does The Church Still Teach That	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Stations Of The Cross	Image Of God	Faith Factory	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Search And Rescue	Your Call	EWTN Gallery	Life on The Rock Encore		Gospel Of Life In Health Care	Defending Life	Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	Backstage	Father Corapi And The Catechism Of The Catholic Church	

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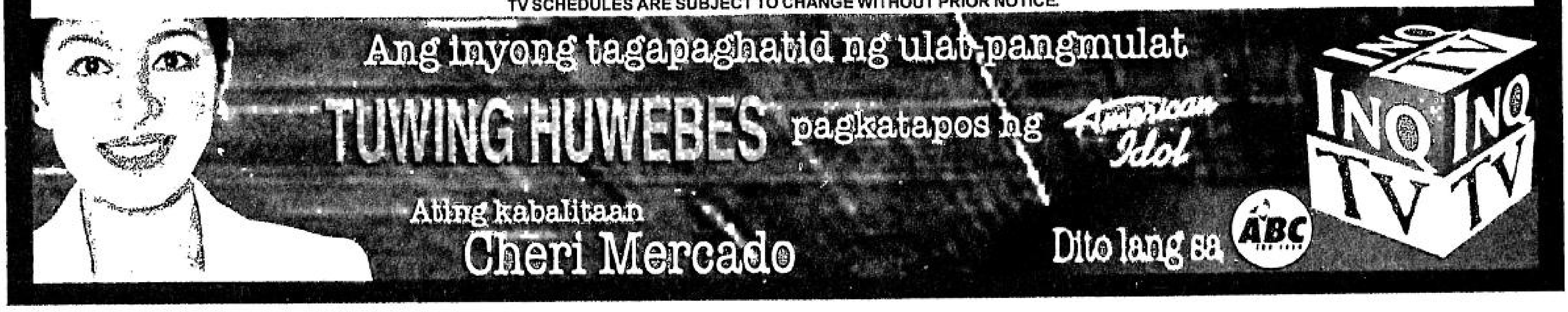

Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
TUWING HUWEBES pagkatapos ng American Idol
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

ENTERTAINMENT

8 free trips to 'best managed city'

LIVING Asia Channel and the Singapore Tourism Board-Philippines are giving away eight trips to Singapore, including accommodations for four-day/three-night stays, in a contest open to all Filipino residents who have access to the travel TV station (via Home, Destiny and Dream cable, and the Internet).

The contest started in November. Viewers are invited to watch Living Asia specials on Singapore, and then to answer trivia questions. Contestants should log onto www.livingasiachannel.net .

"We bring Singapore to the... world through Living Asia Channel," said Rocson Chang, STB area director for the Philippines and Brunei. "I am especially excited by the possibility of viewers winning free trips to Singapore, so they see for themselves just what makes Singapore unique."

Singapore was recently voted Best-Managed City in the World by Jones Lang Lasalle, Ireland's leading real estate service and money management agency. Also called Lion City, it is a top travel and shopping destination in Asia on account of its diverse cultures and cuisines.

Among its many attractions last year were the Robinson's Christmas Village, Zouk Out 2004, The Beatles Live! A Psychedelic Experience, the Singapore Marathon, and the grand Christmas Light-Up.

Already in the 2005 calendar are Party On, Singapore!, Sting's Sacred Love World Tour, and Chinatown New Year Light-Up.

Deadline for joining the contest is midnight of Feb. 20. Winners of the round-trip tickets and hotel accommodations will be announced on March 8.

For details, call tel. 813-0946, or e-mail stbp@pacific.net.ph.

DID YOU KNOW...

Singer/actor/comic **Janno Gibbs** admits that he used to scold his former girlfriend and love team partner, actress/singer/comic **Manilyn Reynes**, whenever she wore outfits that he found too revealing. "I was just being protective of her," says the son of widely respected actor **Ronaldo Valdez**. The Janno and Manilyn tandem was one of the most popular love teams in the '90s.

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 (DTS) RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 (DTS) SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
3 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 SEED OF CHUCKY
3 (DOLBY) OCEAN'S TWELVE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) WHITE NOISE
2 UNO
3 (DTS) ONE MISSED CALL
4 GALING GALING MO BABES
5 BLADE TRINITY

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 MANO PO
2 ONE MISSED CALL
3 (DTS) BLADE TRINITY
4 (DOLBY) SEED OF CHUCKY

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 BUKAS MAY UMAGA
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 SECRETARY
4 HAROLD & KUMAR

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 LASTIKMAN
2 WHITE NOISE
3 (DOLBY) DARKNESS
4 (DTS) 2046

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) WHITE NOISE
2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3 (DTS ES) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 AFTER THE SUNSET

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 HAPPY SIGAW
2 BLADE TRINITY
3 (DOLBY) WHITE NOISE
4 (DTS) AFTER THE SUNSET

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
2 HELLWOLF
3 (DOLBY) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
4 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 RAISE YOUR VOISE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 7953320
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 AISHITE IMASU 1941
3 (DOLBY) OCEAN'S TWELVE

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THX 1 MEET THE FOCKERS	1 WHITE NOISE	1 OCEAN'S 12	5 KUNG FU HUSTLE	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 MEET THE FOCKERS 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50, 11 20	1 WHITE NOISE
2 OCEAN'S 12	2 MEET THE FOCKERS	2 WHITE NOISE	6 MEET THE FOCKERS	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 MEET THE FOCKERS 3 00, 5 30, 8 00, 10 30	2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 WHITE NOISE	3 BLADE: TRINITY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 MEET THE FOCKERS 11 50, 2 20, 4 50, 9 50	7 MADHOUSE	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 OCEAN'S 12 1 30, 4 00, 6 30, 9:00, 11 30	3 NED KELLY
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE	4 KUNG FU HUSTLE	4 BLADE: TRINITY		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 KUNG FU HUSTLE 1 05, 3 10, 5 15, 7 20, 9 25, 11 30	4 OCEAN'S 12
5 MEET THE FOCKERS				GUARANTEED SEATS 5 WHITE NOISE 2 35, 4 45, [illegible] 11 15	5

GB1
GREENBELT 1
1 WHITE NOISE 12 50, 3 00, 5 10, 7 20, 9:30
2 MEET THE FOCKERS 11 40, 2 10, 4 40, 7 10, 9 40

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
WELCOME 2005 SALE January 14 to 31, 2005	WELCOME 2005 SALE January 14 to 31, 2005	3 ANGELS BROADCASTING NETWORK 3 KINGS CONCERT: CELEBRATING THE GIFT-GIVER January 22, 2005

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

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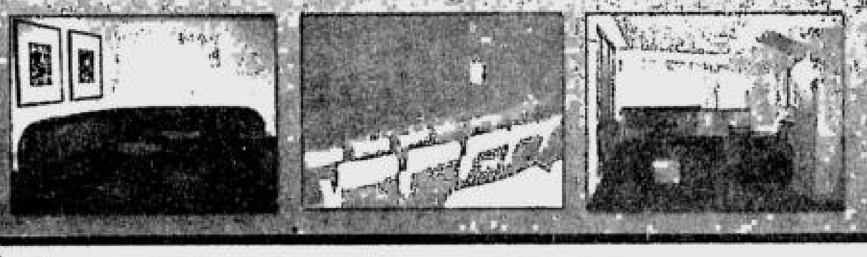

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Alabang Town Center:
January 14 to 31
Per DTI NCR Permit No. A2-016, Series of 2005

Ayala Center Cebu:
January 13 to 16
Per DTI Cebu Permit No. 013, Series of 2005

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OPENS JANUARY 26
IN
AYALA CINEMAS
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
GLORIETTA 1 & 4
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ENTERTAINMENT

8 free trips to 'best managed city'

LIVING Asia Channel and the Singapore Tourism Board-Philippines are giving away eight trips to Singapore, including accommodations for four-day/three-night stays, in a contest open to all Filipino residents who have access to the travel TV station (via Home, Destiny and Dream cable, and the Internet).

The contest started in November. Viewers are invited to watch Living Asia specials on Singapore, and then to answer trivia questions. Contestants should log onto www.livingasiachannel.net .

"We bring Singapore to the... world through Living Asia Channel," said Rocson Chang, STB area director for the Philippines and Brunei. "I am especially excited by the possibility of viewers winning free trips to Singapore, so they see for themselves just what makes Singapore unique."

Singapore was recently voted Best-Managed City in the World by Jones Lang Lasalle, Ireland's leading real estate service and money management agency. Also called Lion City, it is a top travel and shopping destination in Asia on account of its diverse cultures and cuisines.

Among its many attractions last year were the Robinson's Christmas Village, Zouk Out 2004, The Beatles Live! A Psychedelic Experience, the Singapore Marathon, and the grand Christmas Light-Up.

Already in the 2005 calendar are Party On, Singapore!, Sing's Sacred Love World Tour, and Chinatown New Year Light-Up.

Deadline for joining the contest is midnight of Feb. 20. Winners of the round-trip tickets and hotel accommodations will be announced on March 8.

For details, call tel. 813-0946, or e-mail stbp@pacific.net.ph.

DID YOU KNOW...

Singer/actor/comic **Janno Gibbs** admits that he used to scold his former girlfriend and love team partner, actress/singer/comic **Manilyn Reynes**, whenever she wore outfits that he found too revealing. "I was just being protective of her," says the son of widely respected actor **Ronaldo Valdez**. The Janno and Manilyn tandem was one of the most popular love teams in the '90s.

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1	THX MEET THE FOCKERS	WHITE NOISE	OCEAN'S 12	WHITE NOISE 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MEET THE FOCKERS 1 20 3 50 6 20, 8 50, 11 20	WHITE NOISE
2	OCEAN'S 12	MEET THE FOCKERS	WHITE NOISE	MEET THE FOCKERS 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MEET THE FOCKERS 3 00, 5 30, 8 00, 10 30	KUNG FU HUSTLE
3	WHITE NOISE	BLADE: TRINITY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MEET THE FOCKERS 11 50, 2 20, 4 50, 9 50		GUARANTEED SEATS OCEAN'S 12 1 30, 4 00, 6 30, 9 00, 11 30	NED KELLY
4	KUNG FU HUSTLE	KUNG FU HUSTLE	BLADE: TRINITY		GUARANTEED SEATS KUNG FU HUSTLE 1 05, 3 10, 5 15, 7 20, 9 25, 11 30	OCEAN'S 12
5	MEET THE FOCKERS		KUNG FU HUSTLE		GUARANTEED SEATS WHITE NOISE 2 35, 4 45, 6 55, 9 05, 11 15	
6			MEET THE FOCKERS			
7			MADHOUSE			

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2 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
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2 SEED OF CHUCKY
3 (DOLBY) OCEAN'S TWELVE

Lianas MovieCity
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1 (DOLBY) WHITE NOISE
2 UNO
3 (DTS) ONE MISSED CALL
4 GALING GALING MO BABES
5 BLADE TRINITY

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
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2 ONE MISSED CALL
3 (DTS) BLADE TRINITY
4 (DOLBY) SEED OF CHUCKY

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3 (DTS ES) OCEAN'S TWELVE
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2 BLADE TRINITY
3 (DOLBY) WHITE NOISE
4 (DTS) AFTER THE SUNSET

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(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
2 HELLWOLF
3 (DOLBY) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
4 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE

Centre Plaza Cinema
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2 RAISE YOUR VOISE

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1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 AISHITE IMASU 1941
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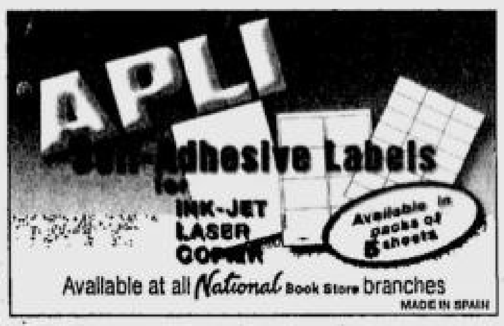
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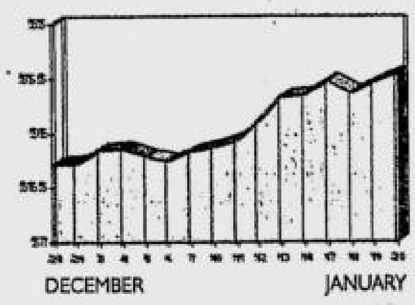

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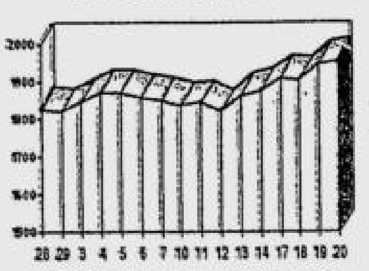
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 19, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares close higher

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARES yesterday closed higher, as investors bought select blue chips such as Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., traders said.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 9.93 points, or 0.5 percent, at 1,956.82, adding to Wednesday's 2.2-percent gain.

Gainers led decliners 65 to 31, while 42 stocks were unchanged.

Volume stood at 3.28 billion shares valued at P1.78 billion compared to Wednesday's 3.45 billion shares worth P1.55 billion.

PLDT was the most actively traded stock, gaining 1.1 percent to close at P1,420 after a 1.1-percent rise in the company's American Depositary Receipts in New York Wednesday.

Metropolitan Bank followed with a 7.4-percent gain to P29. The bank said Thursday it set a Feb. 3 date for the P0.40 cash dividend it declared in November. The dividend will be paid no later than Feb. 28.

"If you look at the fundamentals of companies, the core holdings—namely telecom, energy, distribution and retail—are still trading way below market P/E (price/earnings ratio). Fundamentals indicate those stocks are still cheap," said DA Market Securities president Nestor Aguila.

The market may take a break in the next session, traders said.

"You can't keep on inhaling the stocks, so there may be profit-taking tomorrow. But fundamentally, we're fine," said Aguila. **AP**

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO yesterday closed at its eight-month high of 55.46 against the US dollar on strong inflows of foreign investments, remittances from overseas Filipino workers and the generally bearish outlook on the US currency.

The peso opened at 55.55 to $1, hit an intra-day high of 55.41.

Yesterday's close was eight centavos better than Wednesday's 55.54 to $1. The amount traded at the Philippine Dealing System reached $322 million.

The peso's rally, which started last week, was briefly interrupted by the announcement of Standard & Poor's recent downgrade on the country's sovereign credit rating.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said offshore investors were drawn to local fixed income instruments, as yields became more attractive following recent interest rate increases in the market.

"It's basically portfolio investments coming in. This shows that in the short run, the interest rate differential we have represents a comfortable margin relative to the expectation on the exchange rate risk that the portfolio investors are taking," Buenaventura said, adding that investors were taking advantage of the interest rate differential.

The BSP chief noted that bargain-hunting at the Philippine Stock Exchange by foreign investors was likewise giving a boost to the local currency.

Buenaventura said OFW remittances had likewise continued to pour in. Remittances are expected to grow in the first three months of the year, as OFWs and their families start earmarking funds for the next school year.

He said dollar inflows from the fresh investment made by Japan's Kirin Brewery Ltd. in food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. had likewise boosted the country's foreign exchange supply, thus perking up the peso.

"Of course, there's the expectation that Asian currencies will remain strong relative to the dollar, and that will include ours, barring any bad news," Buenaventura said.

He said the short-term outlook on the peso would likely remain bullish.

"The lower-than-projected budget deficit last year, the strong growth of exports in November and the expectations that these will continue in the near term have encouraged additional portfolio investments in the fixed income market," Buenaventura said.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. added: "It's due to positive news on the budget side, inflows from exporters, OFW remittances and lack of corporate demand."

Farm production rose 5.1% in 2004

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE AGRICULTURE sector posted a 5.1-percent growth in 2004, up from 3.72 percent in 2003, helped by substantial gains in the grains and fisheries sectors.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said the farm sector could have expanded by 5.8 percent last year had it not for the damages inflicted on farms and fishing grounds by the typhoons that hit the country in December. The last quarter growth slowed down to only 1.35 percent.

"But this (5.1 percent) is still 36 percent better compared to the 3.72 percent growth made by the sector in year 2003," Yap said.

The agriculture sector, which accounts for a fifth of the country's gross domestic product, recorded some P800 billion in earnings.

University of the Philippines economist Ernesto Pernia said the sector's 2004 growth was within the target range of 4 to 5 percent.

Government officials and economists are, however, concerned over how to sustain the sector's gains this year. They said stronger farm-to-market linkages were needed to sustain the growth.

"The only way to sustain the agriculture sector growth and safeguard the income of small farmers is to link it (farm sector) up with the market," added Yap.

He said that the DA would strengthen market and production linkages with agribusiness companies including San Miguel Corp. and RFM Swift Foods Corp.

Last year, the crop sub-sector, which accounted for 48 percent of the total agricultural output, posted substantial growth. Palay production increased by 7.38 percent to 14.5 million metric tons, while corn output grew by 17.28

FARM/B5

PLANTERSBANK'S TIER 2 CAPITAL OFFERING
Planters Development Bank (Plantersbank) is raising P1 billion through a Tier 2 capital offering to strengthen its equity base. Citigroup was tapped as issue manager. The move intends to boost the bank's capital base, allowing it to pursue its developmental thrust for small and medium enterprises. Citigroup country officer James Hunt, Plantersbank chair and chief executive officer Ambassador Jesus Tambunting and bank president and chief operating officer Ma. Flordelis Aguenza recently signed the deal.

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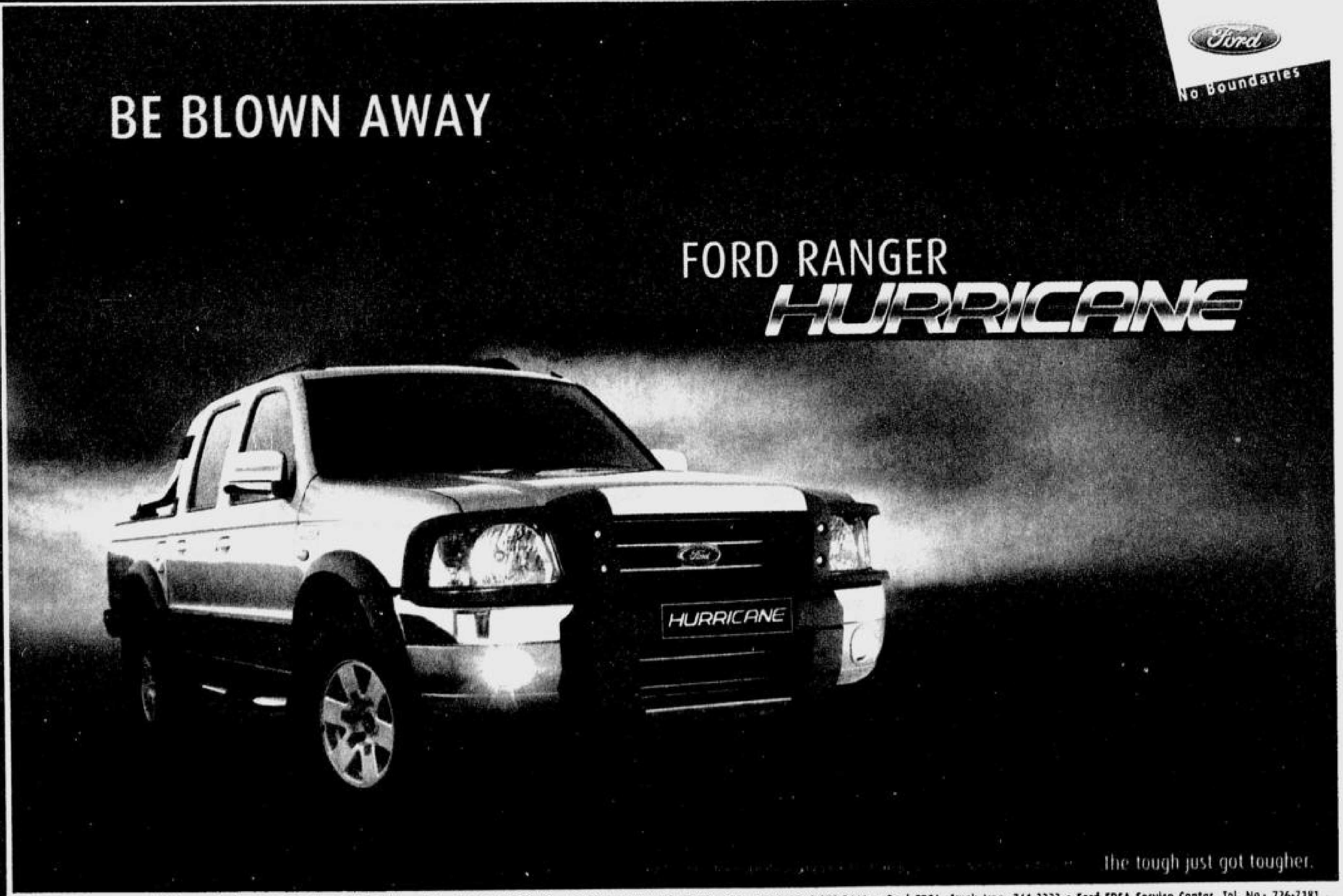

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China firm eyes $100-M investment in RP mining

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A CHINESE firm has earmarked $100 million for a Philippine mining project, Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez yesterday said.

Hernandez said China Metallurgical and Construction Group Inc. had already sent letters to trade and environment officials in Manila, expressing its intent to do business in the country.

"The CMCG has not identified a particular project, (but the commitment is firm)," the official said. "CMCG has already signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (CMP) on identifying possible projects."

Hernandez, who is also managing head of the Board of Investments, said CMCG was one of at least 100 mining firms that attended an investment forum in Beijing earlier this week.

During the forum, at least 23 possible mining projects were presented to investors, who showed interest in all of them, he added.

"We told the Chinese firms that they need not go as far as South America to invest in mining," he said. "The Philippines is so near and so promising."

According to Hernandez, CMCG is one of the biggest mining firms in China, and is engaged in exploration, development and construction projects for mines that produce minerals like iron, chromite, nickel, copper and gold.

"The Beijing forum is only one of many promotional efforts that the government and the local mining industry are taking to (revitalize the sector following) the Supreme Court decision which affirmed that foreign firms are allowed to take part in local mining projects," he said.

Last month, the CMP announced it had invited at least 50 foreign mining firms to the country to drum up interest among investors.

CMP president Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez said the forum, slated in February, was by invitation only and that the group would focus on foreign firms, investment houses and other entities whose decisions could prompt the inflow of investments to the country.

Based on government projections, the revitalization of the sector could push up mining investments to as high as $4.36 billion, with annual potential revenues of $2.32 billion.

Further, as many as 19,000 workers could benefit from new jobs "from identified high-profit mining projects within the next 10 years."

The Department of Trade and Industry has listed the mining sector as one of the seven priority areas for investment promotion, saying that yet untapped local mineral resources are estimated to be worth $964.7 billion.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BANKING GROUP LIMITED
23F GT Tower Ayala Avenue cor HV Dela Costa St., Makati City

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
As of December 20, 2004

ASSETS		Amount
Cash and Cash Items	P	1,584,012 84
Due from Central Bank		110,644,299 18
Due from Other Banks		399,936,097 55
Interbank Loans Receivable		494,409,799 30
Trading Account Securities		
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		2,704,316,513 74
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		4,402,584,737 87
Equity Investments (Net)		2,579,850 00
Due from Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad		1,050,201,146 10
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures & Equipments (Net)		22,532,293 92
Other Assets (Net)' Others		134,990,372 99
TOTAL ASSETS	P	9,389,967,119 62
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	253,012,635 50
Savings Deposits		817,109,000 87
Time Deposits		3,829,504,230 68
Special/Other Deposits		33,026,111 02
Due to Central Bank		8,027,598 34
Due to Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad		3,097,802,177 30
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		918,262 95
Bills Payable		
Interbank Borrowings		538,417,239 60
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		109,421 73
Other Liabilities		225,104,045 00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	8,901,328,328 25
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		**Amount**
Assigned Capital	P	444,323,634 54
Other Capital Accounts		44,315,156 83
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	488,638,791 37
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	9,389,967,119 62
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	1,629,985,321 44
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		1,721,442,805 70
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		1,806,405,159 26
Other Contingent Accounts		1,104,827,556 56
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	6,222,660,846 96

LIST OF SENIOR OFFICERS:

Mr. Johnny Co	General Manager and Country Head
Mr. Wayne Brown	Chief Operating Officer
Mr. Nonilo Cruz	Senior Vice President - Business Banking
Mrs. Arlene Lotilla	Treasurer
Mrs. Bee Lian So	Vice President - International Services
Ms. Regina Fajardo	Vice President - Operations
Ms. Leah Espino	Assistant Vice President - Personal Banking
Mr. Arlino Magsaysay	Assistant Vice President - Regulatory Compliance

Other Information

1. Deposits of:	
a. Government	nil
b. Banks	37,832,020 37
c. Trust Department	nil
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law: Prescribed Ratio 8% Small Ent. 2% Medium Ent.	8.00
Actual Compliance	2.07
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans	140,123,381 00
4. Ratio of Non-Performing loans to total loan portfolio	3.19%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets	140,123,381 00
6. General Provision for Loan Losses	188,134,537 87
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses	105,184,353 17
8. Return on Equity (ROE) - Based on Assigned Capital	44.33%
Return on Equity (ROE) - Based on Shareholder's Equity	30.71%
Return on Equity (ROE)* - Inclusive of Net Due to HO	8.87%
9. Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	5,265,319 14
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/adv to total loans/advances	0.11%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI loans /advances	nil
12. Ratio of Past Due DOSRI loans/adv to total loan portfolio	nil
13. "Net Due to Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad" loans part of capital of Philippine Branch of foreign bank	2,847,781,031 20

*Amended to conform with Circular No. 208 dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to All Banks dated November 29, 1999

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S S

I-WE, JOHNNY CO and WAYNE BROWN of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) JOHNNY CO
General Manager and Country Head

(Sgd.) WAYNE BROWN
Chief Operating Officer

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this Jan. 14, 2005, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax Certificate No 032251431, issued at Manila City, on Feb 19, 2004 and Passport No M1502858, issued in Brisbane Australia on May 20, 2004.

Benjamin B. Mala
NOTARY PUBLIC
Until Dec. 31, 2005
PTR No M0535187
Date Issued Jan. 3, 2005

Doc No 95
Book No. 91
Page No. XXVII
Series of 05

Coral Bay to ship first nickel by March

SINGAPORE—A new Japanese-owned nickel plant in the Philippines aims to make its first shipment to parent company Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd. by March, an official involved in the project said on Thursday.

Coral Bay Nickel Corp. will deliver nickel powder to Sumitomo Metal Mining's Niihama refinery in Japan, where it will be processed into the metal that is used to add strength and sheen to stainless steel for the auto and household appliance sectors.

Nickel prices, up more than 7 percent in the last month, are supported by demand from Asia's booming stainless steel sector and a global shortage of the anti-corrosive metal, although analysts see the supply deficit shrinking in 2005.

Coral Bay, on Palawan island in the western Philippines, has been carrying out test runs since the fourth quarter of last year, said the official for the joint venture.

"Within a couple of months, we will be in commercial production," he said.

To date, the plant has produced and stockpiled a small amount of nickel and cobalt powder, he said.

It uses a hydrometallurgical process to make nickel and cobalt in a mixed sulphide powder, an intermediary product that is processed into metal in Japan.

Coral Bay has capacity to produce 10,000 tons of nickel and 700 to 800 tons of cobalt, the official said—a level of production it is aiming to reach by 2006 at the earliest.

"For 2005, we're still in the stage of ramping up, so we can't expect such numbers," he said, adding Coral Bay had not yet forecast this year's output.

World output of refined nickel was forecast at 1.25 million tons in 2004, rising to 1.32 million tons this year, the International Nickel Study Group said in October.

The Netherlands-based group calculated nickel consumption at 1.26 million tons in 2004, rising this year to 1.32 million tons—roughly in balance with supply, and a marked turnaround from a 40,000-ton deficit in 2003.

Nickel for three-month delivery on the benchmark London Metal Exchange was trading around $14,250 a ton on Thursday—below the 15-year peak of $17,720 hit about a year ago, but almost double its value two years ago.

Cobalt is used for industrial and military applications, such as cutting tools and the production of super-alloys for the aerospace sector.

It is also used in the chemical industry and to make batteries.

Sumitomo Metal Mining owns 54 percent of Coral Bay. Its Japanese partners, Mitsui and Co. and Sojitz Corp., each have an 18-percent stake.

Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp., with 10 percent, is the Philippine partner in the project. The company has been mining nickel ore on Palawan for more than 20 years. *Reuters*

PPA nets ₱1.83B in '04, up 117% from ₱845M

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINE Ports Authority recorded a net income of P1.8 billion from port operations last year, surpassing its 2003 profits by almost a billion pesos and outpacing its revised target by more than P200 million.

Higher port collections, slightly lower operating costs and minimal provisioning for loan revaluation allowed the state-run seaport operator and regulator to surpass its 2003 profits of P845 million by about 117 percent or by P986 million.

The PPA originally targeted a net income of P1.38 billion in 2004, but later revised it to P1.6 billion in the middle of last year.

The PPA is tasked to operate government-owned ports, help regulate the maritime industry and put up more ports to improve the flow of goods and services.

PPA general manager Oscar Sevilla credited the agency's efficiency and cost-cutting for the hefty increase in profits.

Aida Dizon, PPA assistant general manager for finance explained, however, that 2003 was an "abnormal" year for the agency because it had to set aside provisions for the revaluation of its outstanding loans.

As a result, she said profits dropped significantly in 2003.

Last year's performance, she said, was more in step with what the agency normally collects.

The PPA posted P5.586 billion in revenue last year, up 3.4 percent or P185 million from P5.4 billion in 2003.

Of the total revenue, about P215 million came from earnings on investment and fund management.

The bulk of the revenue came from the Manila ports, which account for 60 percent of the agency's total collections.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT
Northern Mindanao
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 858-7123; 2332306; 3504325; 726476

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Center for Health Development – Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, is inviting contractors and security services operators to apply for eligibility and to bid for security services for calendar year 2005 with approved Budget Cost of P820,000.00 sourced out of the GOP appropriations for this Office.

Timetable of bidding process are as follows:

Bidding Process	Schedule
Registration of interested contractors	Starts January 17, 2005
Pre-Bidding Conference	January 20, 2005 2:00 PM, DOH-CHD Conference Room
Period of contractors eligibility check	January 20 to February 10, 2005
Opening of Bids	February 14, 2005 2:00 PM, DOH-CHD Conference Room

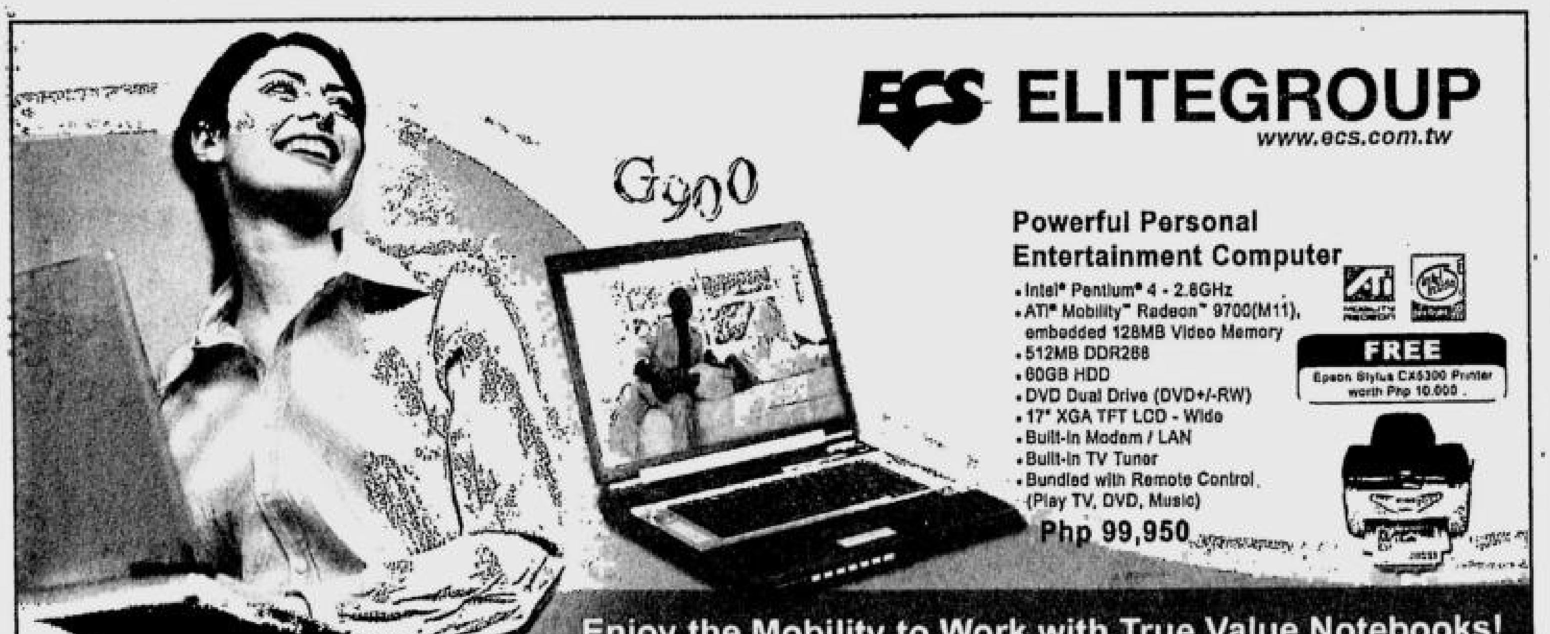
Bid forms will be made available to suppliers/contractors who passed the eligibility check at a non-refundable cost of P50 00.

The Director IV of the DOH-CHD Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, reserve the right to waive any defect or informality in the offers of bids, and rejects any or all bid proposal that may be deemed disadvantageous to the government.

For further information, please inquire from the Bids and Awards Committee, or its Secretariat, or call telephone no 858-7123; 233-2306; 350-4325; or visit our website at www.chd10.doh.gov.ph or email us at chd_cdo@yahoo.com.

(Sgd.) MARIETTA C. FUENTES, MD, MPH, CESO III
Director IV

(PDI–Jan 14 & 21, 2005)



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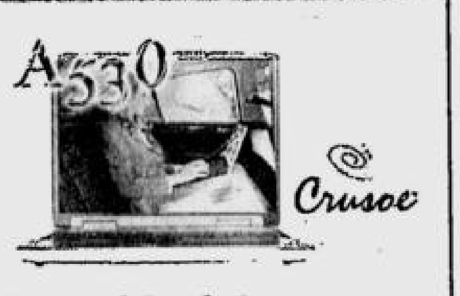

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INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF USED/SECOND HAND PROPERTIES "AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

The National Food Authority (NFA), Region V will conduct a public bidding of the following used/second hand properties:

LOCATION	LOT#	ITEM DESCRIPTION	QTY/UNIT	MINIMUM BID PRICE
I-ALBAY	1.1	SATAKE RICEMILL, 5 TPH Property No 0-NFA-501-PE-A-003	one (1) set	Php 270,000.00
	1.2	BERNABE CONO RICEMILL 12 bags/hr Property No 0-NFA-502-PE-A-002	one (1) set	9,000.00
	1.3	CARGO TRUCK, ISUZU 10 WHEELER Plate # SBD-616 Property # 0-NFA-501-LT-B-001	one (1) unit	98,750.00
	1.4	CARGO TRUCK, HINO Plate # SCH-601 Property # 0-NFA-501-LT-B-005	one (1) unit	79,300.00
	1.5	CORN MILL, JOHN DEERS Model 1104 Property # 0-NFA-501-PE-F-001	one (1) unit	2,000.00
	1.6	GAS EXTRACTION MACHINE Property # 0-NFA-501-OP-A-001 0-NFA-501-OP-A-002	two (2) units	3,000.00
	1.7	POWER TRANSFORMER, 25 kva Brand Westinghouse	two (2) units	3,600.00
	1.8	PACKAGING MACHINE Brand Long good Property # 0-NFA-501-WE-A-002	one (1) unit	54,000.00
	1.9	FOGGING MACHINE Brand Swingfog SN 11 Ser #: 15597/15605 Property # 0-NFA-501-WE-B-001 0-NFA-501-WE-B-003	two (2) units	2,000.00
	1.10	PLATFORM SCALE Brand Century Cap: 1,000 kg Ser # 9110311 Property # 0-NFA-501-WE-C-020	one (1) unit	1,000.00
II-CAM. SUR	II.1	PACKAGING MACHINE Brand Long Good Property # NFA-502-PE-E-001	one (1) unit	64,000.00
		MOBILE DRIER Brand Anihan Cap.: 1.25 ton/batch		
	II.2	Property # NFA-502-PE-B-049	one (1) unit	27,000.00
	II.3	# NFA-502-PE-B-050	one (1) unit	27,000.00
	II.4	# NFA-502-PE-B-051	one (1) unit	27,000.00
III-CAM NORTE		MOBILE DRIER Brand Anihan Cap.: 1.25 ton/batch		
	III.1	Property # 00-NFA-503-PE-B-007	one (1) unit	27,000.00
IV-SORSOGON		MOBILE DRIER Brand Anihan Cap: 1.25 ton/batch		
	IV.1	Property # 01-NFA-504-PE-B-010	one (1) unit	27,000.00
	IV.2	# 01-NFA-504-PE-B-011	one (1) unit	27,000.00
	IV.3	# 01-NFA-504-PE-B-012	one (1) unit	27,000.00
V-MASBATE		MOBILE DRIER Brand Anihan Cap.: 1.25 ton/batch		
	V.1	Property # 01-NFA-505-PE-B-006	one (1) unit	27,000.00

Schedule of Bidding are as follows:

Submission of letter of intent	February 10-16, 2005	Submission of Bids	9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.
Issuance of Bid documents	February 10-15, 2005	Opening of Bids	10:00 a.m.
Bidding proper	February 17, 2005		

Bid documents shall be issued only to interested bidders upon presentation of a letter of intent and a non-refundable fee of Php 300.00 to the FADC secretariat not later than February 15, 2005

Venue for the opening of Bids shall be at the conference room, NFA Regional Office V, Pier Site, Legazpi City

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
Asst. Regional Director Chairman-FADC

(PDI - January 19, 20 & 21 2005)

Standard acquires Today

THE MANILA Standard has acquired Today and will merge the two papers beginning next month, with the Standard as the surviving broadsheet.

As a prelude to the merger, Today this week started printing in the Standard presses to save the daily from further bleeding.

The merged papers will retain Standard editor in chief Jullie Yap in the top slot, but it is not immediately clear, except for the business section staff, what fate awaits the rest of Today's staffers.

Standard will keep the strengthened business coverage of Today, with Today, according to the grapevine, being initially eyed to become the new business section of the Standard.

Today publisher Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. has for years valiantly tried to keep the paper afloat, with capital infusions and loans from diverse personalities like Juan Ponce Enrile, Lucio Tan and lately, Antonio Cojuangco Jr.

Cojuangco apparently backtracked on his initial plan to acquire Today lock, stock and barrel, and decided instead to keep his focus and his inheritance in his capital-intensive Channel 5 venture.

Locsin's brother, Enrique, had apparently seen the handwriting on the wall, and recently moved over to the Manila Times to become its president, bringing along Today's advertising manager.

Today also just recently reformatted itself into a business paper, pirating a number of staffers—including its current president/CEO/editorial director Jose Galang Jr.—from the Manila Times before Enrique's crossover, and adopting "Getting Down to Business" as its new slogan.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Equitable's coup

EQUITABLE-PCIBank president Antonio Go has achieved a coup of sorts, managing to pirate Philippine Stock Exchange chair Alicia Rita Morales-Arroyo to leave the Yuchengcos' RCBC Securities and join PCI Securities as director/president, this we have confirmed.

Arroyo, who earned an MBA triple major in finance, marketing and economics from Northwestern's Kellogg before becoming the wife of Rep. Ignacio "Jose Pidal" Arroyo, is rejoining the Equitable Bank Group, where she trained at its Equicom card operations during her college days.

Her late father, Manuel Morales, was Equitable president, and later chair, in the 1980s.

Money-go-round

- THE ZOBEL de Ayala family issued an unusually swift written reply to dispute the allegation of the Vasquez wing of the extended Madrigal family, saying that contrary to the claim of Dr. Daniel Vasquez, the Zobels are still on good business terms with the rest of the landed clan.
- MANUEL V. Pangilinan has acquired 1,000 more PLDT shares and 500,000 more shares of Piltel, bringing the telecom tycoon's total holdings to 89,874 PLDT shares and 10,051,348 Piltel shares.

At yesterday's closing, MVP's total telecom holdings should be

COCKTALES/B5

PRULINK	PRU LIFE U.K.	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week January 18, 2005	Last Week January 11, 2005
Bond Fund - Peso	1.18110	1.17170
Managed Fund - Peso	1.28737	1.26869
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.0785	1.0730

* *Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.*

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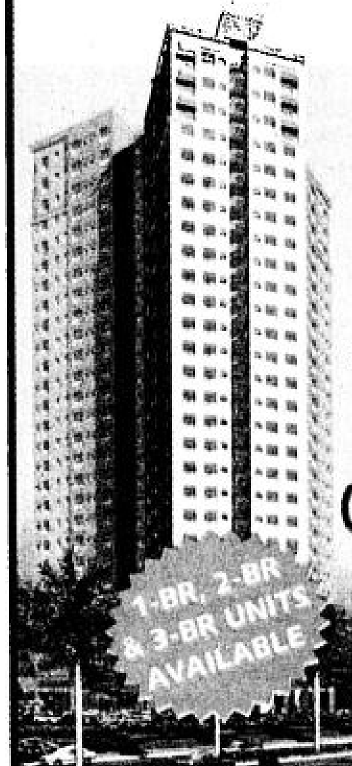

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ROBINSONS LAND CORPORATION

Open House on February 6, 2005 at the Project Site

Citystate Savings Bank, Inc.

708 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City

Statement of Condition

As of December 20, 2004

ASSETS		AMOUNT:
Cash & Cash Items	P	34,770,555 18
Due From Bangko Sentral		13,010,301 41
Due From Other Banks		261,862,004.30
Interbank Loans Receivable		225,000,000 00
Loans, Discounts & Advances (net)		435,435,300 66
Trading Accounts Securities		102,014,320 80
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		23,410,112 63
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (Net)		97,887,703.37
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/ Acquired		142,018,120.71
Others		70,483,888 08
TOTAL ASSETS	P	1,457,498,473.80
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	92,801,977 78
Savings Deposits		785,324,947 71
Bills Payable		24,114,500 78
Due to BSP		350,000.00
Managers Check		4,770,354 87
Accrued Interest, Taxes & Other Expenses Payable		4,046,052 12
Unearned Income & Other Deferred Credits		1,230,241 24
Other Liabilities		21,294,304 00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	934,032,476.46
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS :		
Capital Stock	P	441,000,000.00
Paid-in Surplus		2,222,444.00
Surplus Free		59,975,058 21
Undivided Profits		20,268,495 13
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	523,465,997.34
TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	1,457,498,473.80
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS :		
Items Held For Safekeeping	P	6,475 00
Items Held As Collateral		3,284 00
Late Deposits / payments received		757,596 89
Deficiency Claims Receivable		1,434,382 42
Outward Bills for Collections		16,700 00
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	2,218,438.31

COMPLIANCE WITH MAGNA CARTA LAW:

Prescribed Rates of Compliance	6% For Small Enterprises	2% For Medium Enterprises
Actual Compliance	6.66 %	10.84 %

OTHER INFORMATION: (CB Circular 208)

Non-performing loans and	P	24,521,257.25
Ratio to total Loan Portfolio		3.63%
Classified loans and other risk assets	P	24,521,257.25
General loan loss reserve	P	11,306,831 72
Specific loan loss reserve	P	3,740,750 61
Return on equity (ROE)		5.68%
DOSRI loans/advances	P	17,323,685 78
Ratio to total loan portfolio, and		2.56%
Past due DOSRI loans/advances and ratio to total portfolio		NIL

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
PASIG CITY) S.S.

We, Eduardo D. Olivario and D. Alfred A. Cabangon, solemnly swear that all matters set forth in this report are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO D. OLIVARIO
VP - Comptroller

(Sgd.) D. ALFRED A. CABANGON
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 29th day of December, 2004 affiant exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No 21281707 issued at Bacoor, Cavite on March 10, 2004 and Residence Certificate No. 14191636 issued at Mandaluyong City on January 21, 2004 respectively.

TEODORO D. VILLAPEÑA, JR.
NOTARY PUBLIC
UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 2005
PTR NO. 0417514 1/8/04 PASIG
IBP NO. 605438 1/8/04 BATS.
TIN 227-000-751

Doc. No. 178
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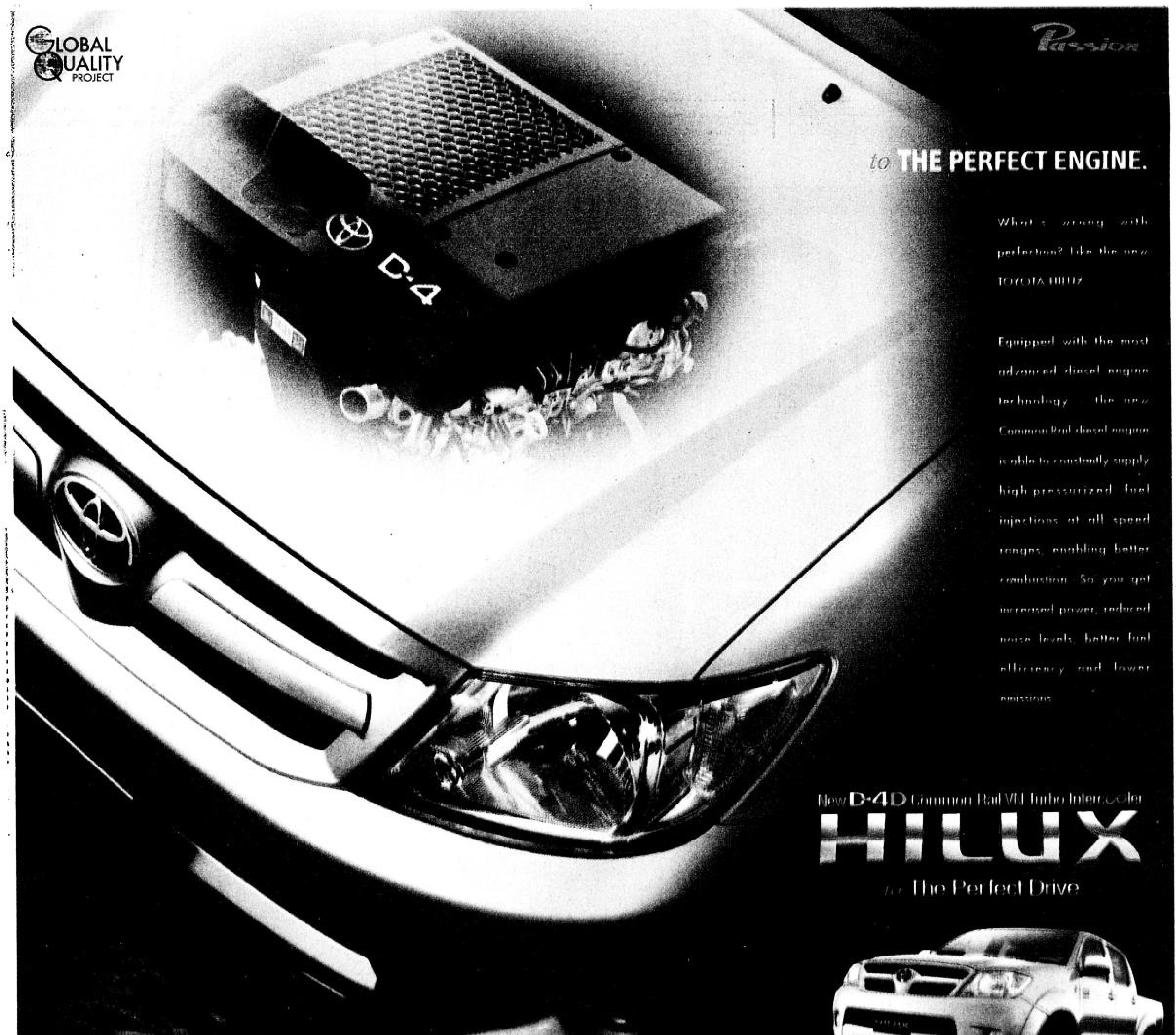
Book No. III
Series of 2004



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Alliance Global OKs ₱1-B stock offering

By Doris C. Dumlao

ALLIANCE Global Group Inc. has approved a P1-billion stock rights offering that will pave the way for the backdoor listing of businessman George Yang's McDonald's restaurant businesses.

AGI yesterday told the Philippine Stock Exchange that its board had approved the offering of 200,471,000 common shares from the unissued portion of its authorized capital at P5 per share.

Yang, AGI's chair and key stockholder, is likewise the Philippine franchise holder of American fastfood giant McDonalds.

Proceeds of the offering will be used mainly to finance the acquisition of 49 percent of the outstanding common shares of Golden Arches Development Corp., Golden Arches Realty Corp. and Y&M Development Corp., now held by McDonald's Restaurant Operation Inc., according to the disclosure.

Since it (Yang's group) completely owns AGI, it's a way to list McDonald's without undergoing IPO (initial public offering) or without distributing shares to the public," said Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roxas.

"It looks like they don't need the money," he said.

However, he said the PSE should have suspended the trading of AGI's shares yesterday pending the submission of the financial statements of the companies to be folded into it.

He said investors would not be able to assess whether this backdoor listing would make sense until the financial statements were made public.

"We don't know what the cost is. We need the financial statements of the companies being bought so that we can understand what the heck we are buying," Roxas said.

But Roxas said there could be several reasons for this transaction, including the easier distribution of shares to heirs, to improve the price per share of AGI or simply to consolidate these assets into a holding company.

AGI, formerly known as Anglo-Watsons Philippines Inc., was originally incorporated with the primary business of glass manufacturing. In 1994, it acquired a glass plant in Canlubang, Laguna.

In 1998, the company changed its corporate name to AGI with Yang's Yorkshire Holdings Inc. as the major controlling shareholder. Yorkshire is a corporation engaged in the acquisition, investments and trading of assets and securities.

The company, now a holding firm, has diversified into other businesses like property development, sale and lease of real estate, maintenance and operations of hotels, restaurants, gyms and parlors as well as research, development, marketing and distribution of technology and technology-derived products and/or services.

CEB to tie up with SIA unit

CEBU Pacific (CEB) is putting up a joint venture with SIA Engineering Company Limited (SIAEC), a unit of Singapore Airlines, for the maintenance of CEB's new fleet of Airbus aircraft and the support of its existing fleet of DC9s and B757s.

The two firms signed a memorandum of understanding last Dec. 17, and are expected to finalize the details of the project early this year. The joint venture will provide line maintenance, technical ramp handling services and light maintenance checks.

CEB has bought 12 brand-new A319s for delivery from September 2005 to early 2007 and is leasing two A320s. The joint venture will be SIAEC's third line maintenance joint venture outside Singapore, besides Pan Asia Pacific Aviation Services in Hong Kong and PT Jas Aero Engineering Services in Indonesia.

CEB is the second largest airline in the Philippines, operating domestic flights to and from 13 cities in the country and international flights from Manila and Cebu to Hong Kong and Seoul.

William Tan, Chief Executive Officer of SIAEC, said: "Our first foray into the Philippines will give us an opportunity to offer our experience and expertise in aircraft certifications through this partnership with Cebu Pacific.

EIB SAVINGS BANK
Cebu South Road, Barangay Bulacao, Talisay Cebu City
STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of December 20, 2004

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	P	523,673
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		972,844
Due from Other Banks		445,320
Investments in bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		59,439,967
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		3,754,655
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures & Equipments (Net)		2,117,741
Other Assets		674,431
TOTAL ASSETS	P	67,928,631

LIABILITIES		
Savings Deposits	P	605,857
Time Deposits		294,253
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		338,650
Other Liabilities		265,559
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	1,504,319

CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	50,000,000
Surplus		16,424,312
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	66,424,312
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	67,928,631

Other Information

1. Deposits of:		
a. Governments	P	–
b. Banks		900,092
c. Trust Department		–
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
Prescribed		
Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2 % for Medium Enterprises
Actual Compliance	0.00%	0.00%
3. Amount of non-performing loans		–
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio		0.00%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets		–
6. General provision for loan losses		–
7. Specific provision for loan losses		–
8. Return on equity (ROE)		2.32%
9. Amount of DOSRI loans/advances		–
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio		0.00%
11. Amount of past due DOSRI loans/advances		–
12. Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/advances to total portfolio		0.00%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

I / WE, Alex A. Pimentel and Benjamin P. Castillo of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) ALEX A. PIMENTEL
President

(Sgd.) BENJAMIN P. CASTILLO
Chairman

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 13 day of January , 2005, affiant exhibiting to me his/her/their Community Tax No. 02867892, issued at Cebu on February 03, 2004 and Community Tax No. 05923814 Issued at Manila on January 08, 2004.

(Sgd.) MA. ESMERALDA R. CUNANAN
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2005
Appt.No. M-03 (2004-2005) Roll No.34562
PTR No. 9403551/1-3-05/ Makati City
IBP No. 627126/12-8-04/Q.C.

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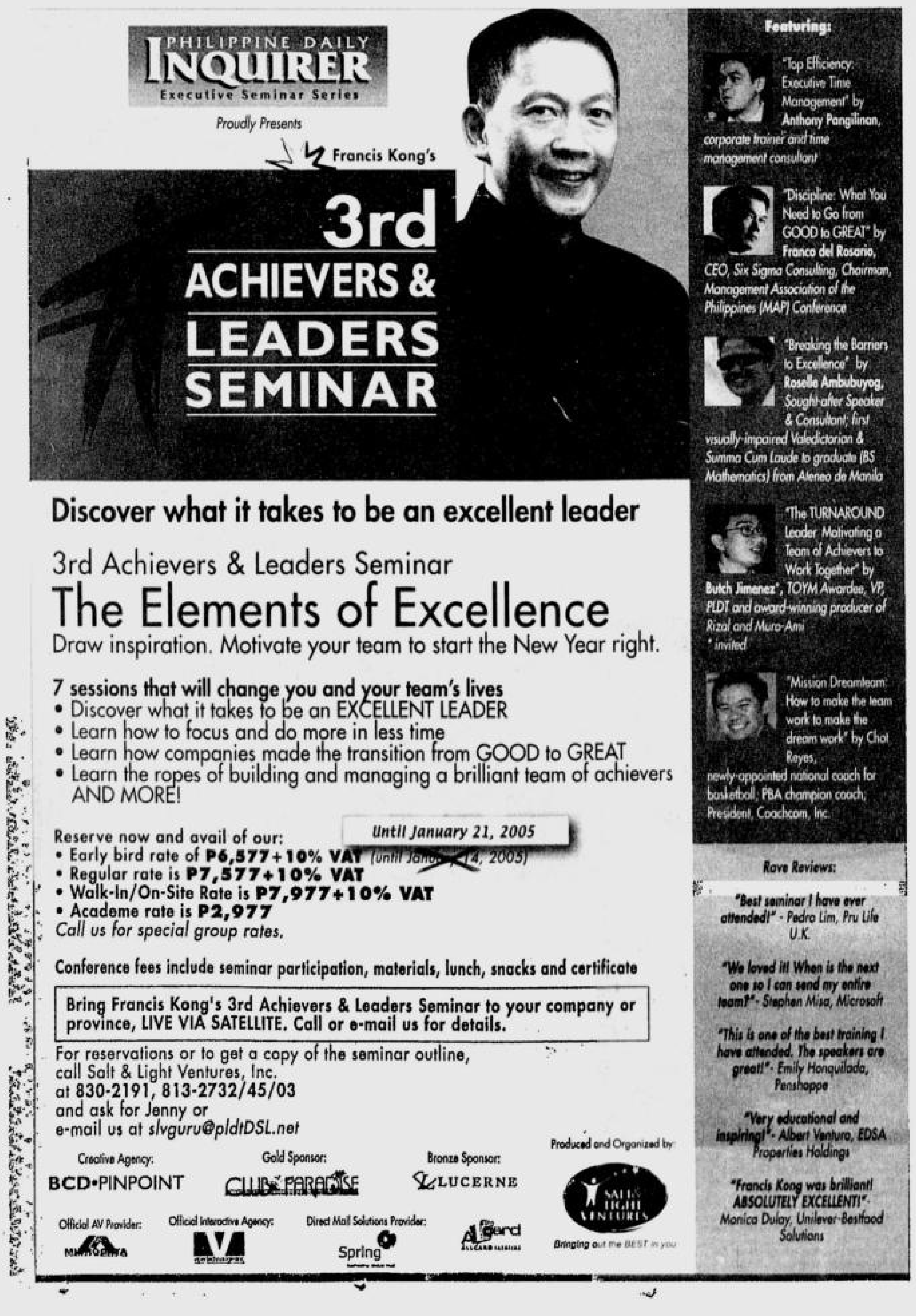
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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 20, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank, Inc.	2.9	3	2.9	3	4,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	27	27.5	27	27.5	626,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	54.5	55	54	55	1,350,800
China Banking Corp.	560	570	560	570	2,720
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49.5	50	49.5	49.5	1,187,400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.42	930,000
International Exch. Bank	16.75	17.5	16.75	17	427,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	29	27	29	4,245,600
Philippine National Bank	22.75	23.5	22.75	23	81,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	10,200
Security Bank Corp.	32.5	33	31.5	32	1,738,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	39,300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.88	0.9	330,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2	2.04	1.98	2	3,392,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	110	112	110	111	11,710
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1780	1785	1780	1785	1,110
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	75,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.98	2.02	1.88	1.88	52,296,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	930	935	920	930	77,260
Ipocola Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.05	75,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.035	0.035	0.034	0.035	15,500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.35	0.41	0.35	0.41	110,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.5	3.55	3.45	3.5	17,999,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	25,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1415	1420	1415	1420	190,630
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.7	0.67	0.69	5,550,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	128,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17.5	17	17.25	109,200
Manila Electric Co. B	27	27	26.5	27	964,400
Petron Corp.	3.5	3.55	3.45	3.55	8,446,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.12	1.08	1.12	181,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.46	1.56	1.46	1.56	280,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	593,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	200,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.39	0.43	0.38	0.4	6,220,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	40,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3	3.25	3	3.15	8,874,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	6,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	30,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3.05	3	3.05	87,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	66,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	27.5	388,200
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	150,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	330,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	27,500
San Miguel Corp. B	78	78	78	78	5,500
Universal Robina Corp.	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.6	35,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co., Inc.	9.8	13.25	9.8	13.25	9,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	116,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	7,000,000
Ayala Corp.	8	8	7.8	7.8	8,137,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.55	3.7	3.55	3.7	1,013,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12	12	12	5,200
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.029	0.027	0.029	33,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.9	1.92	57,000
APC Group Inc.	0.155	0.17	0.155	0.17	22,070,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	133,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.8	1.64	1.8	26,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	21.25	21.25	21	21.25	59,800
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.99	0.93	0.93	84,360,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.165	0.18	0.165	0.18	5,380,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.175	0.185	0.175	0.185	9,950,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.55	5,316,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.034	0.035	0.032	0.034	10,500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	400,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.6	9.5	8.6	9.5	10,845,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	37	37.5	37	37.5	538,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.065	0.065	5,700,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.85	0.94	0.85	0.94	11,150,000
Ionics Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.58	1.6	712,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.15	3.15	681,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.65	2.75	2.46	2.48	1,965,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.32	2,102,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	150,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	30,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.51	0.52	0.5	0.5	154,440,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	180,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	42,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.145	0.17	0.145	0.17	2,950,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.86	360,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	260,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.85	3.95	3.85	3.95	36,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	600,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	1,610,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.22	2,740,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.66	1.72	1.64	1.72	217,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	10,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	2,000,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.64	0.67	0.64	0.67	14,090,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.16	1.18	1.1	1.14	6,879,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.57	0.63	0.56	0.59	1,650,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	10,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.36	0.32	0.36	4,930,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	18.5	19	18.5	18.75	983,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	4,300
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.8	8.2	7.8	8.2	9,659,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.28	0.28	290,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.59	0.68	0.59	0.68	950,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.33	8,360,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	21,500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.36	4,878,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.21	0.19	0.19	2,590,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	190,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.44	2.46	2.44	2.46	51,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.215	0.235	0.215	0.225	9,930,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	162,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.5	2,974,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	410,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc.B	0.6	0.64	0.6	0.64	420,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	180,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.7	5.3	4.7	5.2	2,440,000
Benguet Corp. A	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	52,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	29,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.48	0.49	0.46	0.46	52,880,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.54	0.55	0.52	0.52	60,790,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.021	301,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.028	298,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	348,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.02	1.08	1.02	1.06	21,498,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.1	1.26	1.1	1.24	21,874,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.225	0.23	0.21	0.23	1,590,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	600,000
Interport Res.	0.0046	0.005	0.0046	0.0048	16,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	123,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	520,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.007	0.006	0.007	288,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.46	2.5	74,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.08	43,300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000

DISCLOSURES

MONDRAGON International Phils. Inc. confirmed that it had requested the Securities and Exchange Commission for a 30-day reprieve to support its motion for the reconsideration of an SEC order suspending the trading of its securities.

***

ALLIANCE Global Group Inc. approved the offering of 200,471,000 common shares from the un-issued portion of its authorized capital at P5 per share.

***

BENGUET Corp. set the record date for its March 16 annual stockholders' meeting on Jan. 28.

***

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. set the listing of 34,330 common shares, availed of and fully paid for under its tandem stock purchase and option plan, to Jan. 20.

Compiled by D.J. Yap, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

January 20, 2005

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.768758	1.000000	55.5520
Japan	Yen	0.007478	0.009728	0.5404
United Kingdom	Pound	1.438038	1.870600	103.9156
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098582	0.128235	7.1237
Switzerland	Franc	0.648030	0.842957	46.8279
Canada	Dollar	0.626381	0.814797	45.2636
Singapore	Dollar	0.470879	0.612520	34.0267
Australia	Dollar	0.583409	0.758898	42.1583
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.039254	2.652661	147.3606
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205002	0.266667	14.8139
Brunei	Dollar	0.469442	0.610650	33.9228
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.020007	0.026025	1.4457
UAE	Dirham	0.209340	0.272309	15.1273
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.300800	72.2620
Argentina	Peso	0.261928	0.340716	18.9275
Brazil	Real	0.283884	0.369276	20.5140
Denmark	Kroner	0.134400	0.174828	9.7120
India	Rupee	0.017628	0.022931	1.2739
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.202332	0.263193	14.6209
Mexico	New Peso	0.068520	0.089131	4.9514
New Zealand	Dollar	0.539063	0.701213	38.9538
South Africa	Rand	0.127278	0.165563	9.1974
Korea	Won	0.000746	0.000970	0.0539
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024182	0.031456	1.7474

Lifting of tax perks seen to drive up power rates

By Abigail L. Ho

CONSUMERS may again be on the losing end once Congress decides to lift the value-added tax exemptions on the electricity sales of power firms while slapping VAT on coal, natural gas and imported petroleum products.

Lanao del Norte Rep. Alipio Cirilo Badelles, chair of the House committee on energy, said electricity users at the household level would likely be burdened with an additional 74 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in power charges, if this proposal passed into law.

He said this was discussed at length during a recent House committee on energy hearing.

The power rate situation is expected to evolve "from bad to worse" once the National Power Corp. receives from the Energy Regulatory Commission the final authority to increase rates, Badelles said.

The lifting of the VAT exemption on electricity sales will automatically redound to higher electricity rates because of the pass-on nature of the tax, he added.

"If this happens, the cost of electricity in the Philippines will be a disincentive for both local and foreign investments as the country will have one of the highest electricity rates in the region," Badelles said.

The congressman said that the country's power rates, both in the industrial and residential sectors, are among the highest in the world.

According to an in-house study by the Lopez-led First Generation Holdings Corp., Philippine industrial electricity rates were lower only than those in Japan and Turkey.

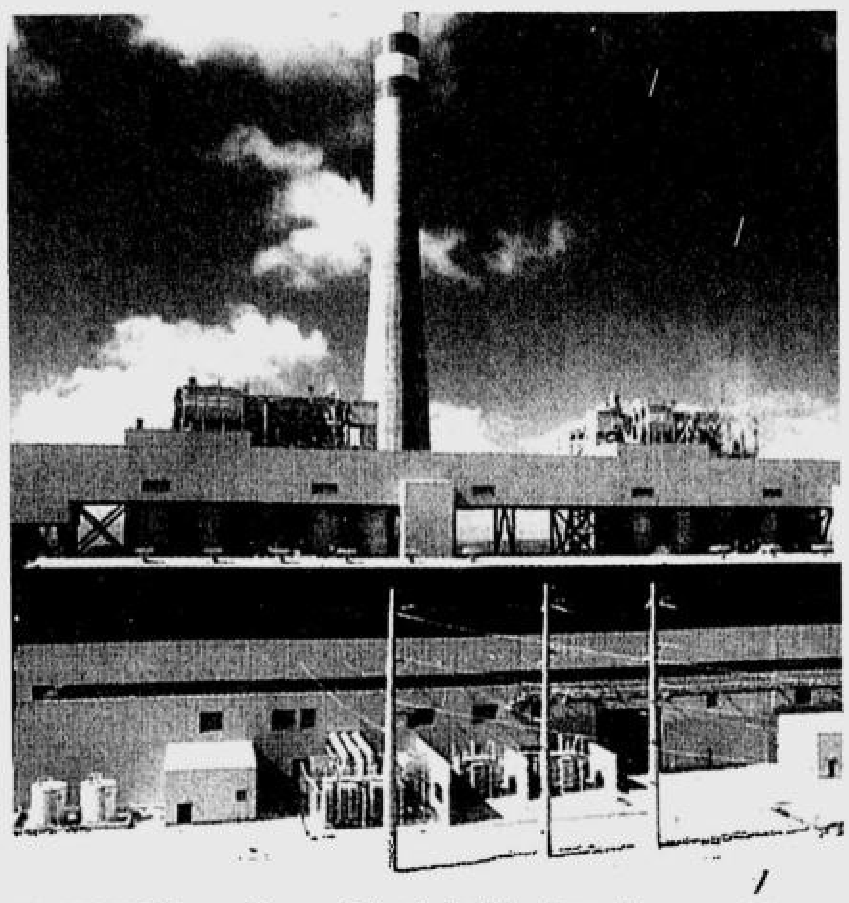
The country's industrial power rates are even higher than those in developed countries like the United States, Germany and New Zealand.

It is also higher than those in neighboring countries like Indonesia, Thailand and Korea.

On top of lifting the VAT exemption on electricity sales of power firms, the cost of producing power could go even higher with the imposition of VAT on coal imports.

Most of the country's baseload power plants—or plants that run 24 hours a day, seven days a week—run on coal.

Apart from higher electricity rates, consumers would also be subjected to higher petroleum product prices as local oil firms would have to factor in the VAT in their fuel product prices.



A NATIONAL Power Corp. coal plant in Pagbilao, Pangasinan.

Cocktales

From page B3

worth more than P162.8 million. And that does not include his nest egg in the resurgent Metro Pacific.

Heard through the grapevine

TRADE Secretary Cesar Purisima will be moving over to head the Department of Finance starting Feb. 15, with the retirement of current chief Juanita Amatong.

Malacañang, in the meantime, is still shopping around for a new trade secretary as gung-ho and as driven as Purisima.

The trade secretary, incidentally, will finally be saying goodbye to bachelorhood. An October wedding date has already been scheduled, with Corazon de la Cruz, a credit manager of HSBC, as the lucky bride.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Investments in IT services sector up 49% to ₱8.07B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INVESTMENTS in information technology projects and IT-enabled services, particularly call centers, went up 49.4 percent to P8.07 billion in 2004 from P5.4 billion in 2003, according to Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima.

"[This indicates that] the Philippines may not be as 'bad' as it is bandied about in the international markets," Purisima said.

The official was reacting to the publicized results of a study sponsored by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank titled "Philippines: Moving Toward a Better Investment Climate."

A survey of 716 companies showed that the top "major or severe" constraints in investing in the country were macroeconomic instability, corruption, electricity and tax rates and uncertainty on economic policy.

In a speech read in his absence during a forum on the dissemination of the WB-ADB study, Purisima said: "Investment applications for the setting up of contact centers, business process outsourcing and software development facilities, and semiconductor production sites continue to increase."

He said that while the world industry leader in contact centers was India, the Philippines was universally accepted as the close alternative to other countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and China.

"The mother companies of these call center facilities [generally based in the United States and United Kingdom] have largely invested in the Philippines and provided substantial job opportunities," Purisima said.

He added that such firms buck the trend of shying away from the country because of its highly literate work force that can understand, speak and carry on productive discussions in English.

The work force is highly trainable, with high efficiencies enhanced by strong customer service orientation, Purisima said.

"A well-kept secret is that there is a very low employment turnover rate in this sector in the Philippines, which is less than one percent," he said.

Purisima said that India was plagued by recurring resignations and company transfers of workers in search of higher salaries.

In other sectors, such as telecommunications and automotive manufacturing, Purisima said big companies from Japan, South Korea and Singapore were "quietly making money and putting in fresh capital instead of pulling out."

"I personally would like an analysis of why such companies do so despite all this debilitating 'doom and gloom' habitually appended to the Philippines," the official said.

Farm production . . .

From page B1

percent to 5.4 million metric tons, the Bureau of Agriculture Statistics said.

The other crops that recorded significant output expansion last year were banana, pineapple, tomato and rubber.

The livestock sub-sector, which contributed 13.53 percent to total agricultural production last year, posted a decline of .41 percent due to the drop in hog and cattle production, the BAS said. Poultry raisers posted a production increase of 4.23 percent, accounting for 15.57 percent of the total farm output last year.

The 17.90 percent surge in aquaculture production contributed to the 9.45 percent growth posted by the fisheries sub-sector. Production of commercial fisheries sector moved up by 1.86 percent, while the output of the municipal fisheries sector rose by 2.43 percent.

Less politics, more economics

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

"THE SITUATION has dramatically changed," said Vicente Fabe, chair of Pambansang Kilusan ng Samahan ng Magsasaka (Pakisama). "We have double trouble: more hunger and less government resources because of the fiscal deficit. Government must spend our taxes wisely, with less politics and more economics."

Fabe heaved a sigh of relief when the massive food coupon program was downscaled.

Like many others, he thought this was a knee-jerk reaction guided more by politics than economics. Fabe prefers that the money be more properly spent for cost-effective agricultural programs to address both our hunger and poverty problems.

The DA budget

According to the Agriculture Fishery and Modernization Act (Afma), the Department of Agriculture is supposed to receive P32.5 billion to carry out agriculture programs. Unfortunately, Congress never gave the DA more than P19 billion. Worse, the amount was even decreased to P15 billion in the last 2 years.

Is the use of these scarce funds guided by politics, or economics?

Wilfredo David, chancellor of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños, cited an example in his book, "Averting the Water Crisis in Agriculture."

He said it would cost between P200,000 to P600,000 to irrigate a hectare of farmland using the National Irrigation System (NIS). This is because the NIS is involved huge multimillion-peso multi-year projects covering large tracts of lands.

On the other hand, a shallow tube well covers 3 hectares and costs an average of P25,000 a hectare. In addition, it has the benefit of having a Return on Investment (ROI) almost ten times that of the NIS.

You can imagine why David expected more money to be allocated for shallow tube wells. Instead, he showed that in 2003, the P3.7 billion allocated to the NIS was more than seven times the P0.5 billion given for shallow tube wells.

While it is true that some areas are suited only for NIS and others are not suited for shallow tube wells, David believes that there are enough areas for shallow tube wells, considering the large number of unirrigated lands. Of course, this is assuming that the economic perspective would prevail.

Upon learning this information, the more skeptical farmer leaders said this was understandable because there was more opportunity for corruption in big, rather than small, projects. Others said that the NIS was preferred for political considerations, since politicians could point to the NIS as an obvious accomplishment to aid their reelection.

"You see? Its politics, not economics," said Fabe.

Considering our current dismal state, economics must be our guide in deciding our budget allocations. We must also think creatively and "out of the box."

Other alternatives

According to the table below, we must realize that the figures vary depending on the area being considered. This is why decentralized, rather than centralized, decision making is needed. Assuming that the above national average data applies to a community, we can make a number of conclusions.

For irrigation, the preferred mode as measured by ROI is rehabilitation. Since this is less politically attractive, it gets an inordinately low percentage of the irrigation budget. This must change.

When compared to the NIS, the same level of rice yield can be achieved in a more cost effective way by saving wastage through dryers. In certain situations, given a choice of where to use scarce funds, dryers should have priority over the NIS.

Seeds result in an even higher ROI than both irrigation and dryers. When considering increased rice production, we should not completely rely on government. If the farmers know the returns are good, they will invest without government subsidies. This is how, with a smaller rice budget in 2001, we nevertheless more than doubled the certified rice usage from 700,000 to 1.5 million hectares under the management of DA's Francisco Malabanan.

The result was record rice production levels and increased farmer incomes.

System of Rice Intensification

What appears to have the highest ROI of all is SRI (System of Rice Intensification).

A UPLB conference on SRI documented an average yield of 6.1 tons per hectare from 39 different reports. The most impressive was the 8-ton average yield for seven contiguous hectares in Magallon, Negros Occidental.

And yet, while P6 billion is allocated for irrigation and P780 million is allocated for hybrid seeds (even though some say massive subsidy is not needed because the experienced high returns are sufficient to motivate the private sector to invest without subsidy), less than P1 million is currently allocated for SRI. The DA is now considering increasing the SRI allocation.

"I hope SRI gets a higher budget allocation," Fabe said. "And I hope that from now on, in this and other areas, economics more than politics will determine how our government will spend our very scarce resources."

(The author is the chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for Agriculture, and Trade and Industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635)

Methods to Increase Rice

METHOD	Additional cost per Ha (pesos)	Additional Yield per Ha (pesos)	Additional Value per Ha (pesos)	Return on Investment (ROI)
Irrigation				
NIS	200,000	4.8	33,600	16.8 %
Shallow Tube wells	25,000	4.8	33,600	134 %
Rehabilitation	20,000	4.8	33,600	168 %
DRYERS (P200,000 for 20 has)	10,000	.35	2,450	24.5 %
SEEDS				
Hybrid	4,400 (Includes 2,000 for other costs)	3.0	21,000	477 %
		1.3	9,100	1,400 %
Certified	650	2.9	18,300	30,500 %
SRI (System of Rice Intensification)	600 (one time cost)			

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Grim tech news hit Asian shares

SINGAPORE—Asian stock markets fell on Thursday and European shares looked set to follow after a batch of sour US earnings reports and a profit warning from Sony Corp.

The dollar hovered near a two-month high versus the euro on economic data that boosted the case for higher US interest rates.

Oil prices fell sharply after a US government report showed a big increase in national petroleum stockpiles, easing worries of a crunch at the height of the winter heating season.

After the close of trade in Tokyo, consumer electronocs giant Sony said it had slashed its operating profit estimate by 31 percent for this business year because of unexpectedly large price drops for its products.

The grim news for the technology sector came after online marketplace eBay Inc. sank 13 percent in after-hours trading on news its earnings had missed Wall Street's forecasts.

A lackluster earnings outlook from Motorola Inc., which sank 7 percent on Wall Street, also hurt investor sentiment for tech stocks.

"A lot of people are still waiting for the market to hit a bottom before buying stocks and sentiment has been quite cautious despite the rebound in the last few days," said Frederick Tsang, research director at China Everbright Group in Hong Kong, where the Hang Seng Index dropped 0.9 percent.

Japan's Nikkei stock average fell 1.06 percent to a one-month closing low of 11,284.77. Sony closed down one percent before its profit warnings, while cell phone maker Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. sank 1.7 percent following the Motorola news.

By 0615 GMT, MSCI's index of non-Japan Asian stock markets had fallen 0.65 percent.

Financial bookmakers in London forecast the UK's FTSE 100 to open down 30-32 points, France's Cac-40 to fall 20-39 points and the DAX index in Germany to drop 35-46 points.

Further earnings disappointment from bank JPMorgan Chase & Co. and drug maker Pfizer Inc. raised concerns about profit trends in the United States, where the Dow Jones industrial average lost 0.84 percent to 10,539.97. The Nasdaq Composite fell 1.54 percent to 2,073.59.

Shares of Singapore computer audio equipment giant Creative Technology Ltd. tumbled 4.8 percent after the company posted a 10-percent slide in quarterly profit before a one-off investment gain and goodwill charge, as marketing expenses rose.

PCCW Ltd. was suspended in Hong Kong before it announced the largest investment ever in a Hong Kong company by a mainland firm. China Network Communications Group Corp., the nation's second-largest fixed-line phone company, is paying $1 billion for 20 percent of PCCW at a 25.5 percent premium to PCCW's closing price on Wednesday.

Miner BHP Billiton slipped 1.3 percent, leading the Australian market down 0.4 percent.

The dollar was at 102.62 yen little changed from late US trade. It hit a five-year low around 101.67 yen on Monday.

US crude oil futures fell sharply in Asia, ahead of the expiry of the front month contract, after US government inventory data showed supplies of crude oil and distillate fuels increased last week. *Reuters*

Japan closures in '04 lowest in decade

TOKYO—The number of Japanese companies going bankrupt fell to the lowest in a decade in 2004, thanks to an increasing number of funds willing to invest in turning around struggling businesses, a report showed on Thursday.

Research firm Teikoku Databank said the number of Japanese firms that went under in 2004 fell to 13,837, down 16.8 percent from the previous year and the second straight year of decline.

The total debt of bankrupt firms fell 32.6 percent from the year before to 7.93 trillion yen ($77.13 billion), the fourth straight year of year-on-year declines, Teikoku said.

A disparity between the "haves" and "have-nots" of corporate Japan will probably be behind business failures this year, the research firm added.

"We expect the number of companies that fall into bankruptcy to remain low for a while, thanks to government aid," said Teikoku in a statement.

"But 2005 will still likely see problems such as a gap between big and small companies as well as urban and regional firms."

Aside from the state-backed turnaround body the Industrial Revitalization Corp. of Japan, the emergence of a clutch of corporate revival programs and private equity funds is helping to nurture many Japanese companies back to health. *Reuters*

El Paso to sell Asian assets worth $500M

SINGAPORE—US energy company El Paso Corp., which has struggled with heavy debts since 2001, has decided to sell its Asian power assets to raise an estimated $500 million, sources familiar with the plan said on Wednesday.

It would be the last major power portfolio in Asia to be sold by a US energy company since the 2001 collapse of Enron prompted a retreat from the region by Western utilities.

El Paso runs power plants with a gross capacity of 4,153 megawatts in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, China, Indonesia, South Korea and the Philippines, of which 1,997 megawatts are wholly owned by the US company, one source said.

One megawatt is enough to power about 1,000 modern homes.

The sources, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters that El Paso's assets in Asia carried an estimated enterprise value of more than $1 billion, including debts.

"ABN Amro is the banker appointed by El Paso and they are doing a formal auction," said another source.

A spokesperson for Dutch bank ABN Amro NV in Asia said he could not comment immediately. El Paso officials were not available to comment.

El Paso, whose biggest asset in Asia is its 50-percent stake in a 1,800-megawatt power plant in South Korea, is trying to emulate the sale by US firm Edison International of its offshore power assets last year, which fetched $5.4 billion including debts.

Oil company Royal Dutch/Shell is also selling its global power joint venture with US construction firm Bechtel.

InterGen carries a value of an estimated $5 billion, sources say. *Reuters*

GM profits fall

DETROIT—General Motors Corp. on Wednesday said fourth-quarter earnings fell 37 percent due to growing US health-care costs and bigger losses from its European automotive operations.

The world's largest automaker also warned it may only break even in the first quarter, well below expectations, and said its North American automotive operations would lose money due to health-care spending.

"It's a huge drag," GM chief financial officer John Devine said, referring to healthcare costs while on a conference call with analysts and reporters. "We have to find a way of reducing that going forward."

GM said its net earnings including one-time items fell to $630 million, or $1.11 per share, from $1 billion, or $2.13 per share, in the previous fourth quarter.

Once again, earnings from GM's financial services arm far exceeded profits from its core automotive operations.

Excluding one-time items, GM earned $569 million, or $1.01 per share, beating Wall Street expectations. Analysts had expected a profit of 92 cents per share, according to Reuters Estimates.

GM shares fell 16 cents to $36.61 in midday trading on the New York Stock Exchange.

"(The) stock reaction should be negative on this report, due to (first quarter) outlook," analyst Michael Bruynesteyn of Prudential Equity Group wrote in a report, adding that the weak outlook increased pressure on the rest of the year.

GM said it expects break-even or better in the first quarter, due to cuts in vehicle production and sales of lower-margin cars and trucks. Wall Street analysts expected GM to earn $1.01 per share in the first quarter.

Devine said the outlook implies that GM will lose money from its North American and European automotive operations.

GM expects vehicle production in North America will drop 7 percent in the first quarter, including a costly drop in output of its highly profitable but aging full-size sport utility vehicles.

GM recorded several one-time items in the fourth quarter of 2004 for a net gain of $61 million, or 10 cents per share. *Reuters*

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Ces Drilon, ABS-CBN business news anchor and TOWNS 2004 Awardee will co-emcee the event with Nicanor Perlas.

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US economy continues to expand, US Fed says

WASHINGTON—Shoppers and tourists kept salespeople busy, factories for the most part hummed and the jobs picture brightened over the last few months, fresh signs that the US economy is moving solidly ahead.

Those were some of the developments contained in the Federal Reserve's latest snapshot of economic activity, released Wednesday. The Fed's survey of business conditions around the United States also suggested that inflation isn't currently a danger to the economy.

Eleven of the Fed's 12 regional districts characterized economic activity from late November through early January as expanding, the Fed survey said.

The report is dubbed the Beige Book for the color of its cover, but the signals that it sent were anything but drab.

These indicators of an improving economy will be discussed when Fed policy-makers meet for the first time this year, on Feb. 1-2.

Economic analysts are predicting that the Fed probably will boost a key short-term interest rate by one-quarter percentage point—to 2.5 percent—at that time.

The Fed report suggests that "the idea of measured tightening remains the order of the day," said Stuart Hoffman, chief economist at PNC Financial Services Group.

"The Beige Book didn't signal more concern about inflation or about the economy. That's a perfect recipe for another quarter-point rate hike," he said.

Fed policy-makers raised rates five times in 2004—with each increase by a quarter-point.

It was part of a campaign that started in June to move rates from what had been an extraordinarily low level to a more normal one now that the economy has recovered from the 2001 recession and terror attacks.

The Fed survey said that "consumer spending increased in most districts" since its last survey released in early December. Consumer spending is important because it accounts for roughly two-thirds of all economic activity in the United States.

Gift cards sold briskly in some markets, although sales of automobiles were mixed, the survey noted.

"Adding to the strength in household spending was an increase in tourism in several districts," the report said.

Hotel occupancy rates were up in the Fed districts of Boston as well as San Francisco, where the number of Japanese visitors to Hawaii has returned to pre-Sept. 11, 2001, levels, the report said.

On the manufacturing front, factory activity generally strengthened. "Looking ahead, manufacturers expected conditions to remain positive in coming months," the survey said. "Most districts reported that manufacturers intend to increase their capital spending in 2005."

AP

CHILDREN at a Refugee camp in Mataie sing, part of program to help children traumatized after the tsunami disaster in Banda Aceh. Indonesia said Monday it needs up to $150 billion over the next five years to build the roads, communications and power plants needed to put its economy back to life. AFP

PC shipments up 12% in 2004, Gartner says

FRANKFURT—Worldwide shipments of personal computers grew 11.8 percent in 2004 to 189 million units on the back of strong sales of mobile PCs, market research firm Gartner said on Wednesday.

"Lower prices, better performance and wireless accessibility accelerated mobile sales," Gartner's Computing Platforms Worldwide chief Charles Smulders said in a preliminary report.

Dell extended its lead over other sellers, raising its share of the world market to 16.4 percent from 14.9 percent in 2003 and increasing its unit sales by 23 percent as lower costs for components helped it cut prices.

Number two Hewlett-Packard (HP) held its market share steady at 14.6 percent, increasing sales by 12 percent. IBM kept its third place despite a drop to 5.5 percent of the global market from 16.3 percent in 2003.

China's Lenovo Group will move up to third place next year after it completes its purchase of IBM's PC business.

"The stress on PC vendors from operating on such low margins led to IBM's exit," Smulders said. "Expect further consolidation."

In the United States, which accounts for one third of the world market, shipments rose 8.3 percent to 62.2 million units, with weaker-than-expected desktop sales but solid notebook market growth.

Gateway maintained its number-three ranking there, behind Dell and HP, but saw its market share slip to 5.8 percent from 6.3 percent.

"With Gateway's renewed focus on retail as well as the entrance of new notebook vendors, including Averatec, the battle for the retail shelf space became more intense," Smulders said.

In Europe, the Middle East and Africa (Emea), shipments rose 14 percent to 61.8 million units, rivaling the US market.

"The market in Europe was strengthened by favorable exchange rates, strong mobile growth and by businesses finally replacing their PCs," said Gartner analyst Ranjit Atwal.

Second-ranked Dell and fourth-placed Fujitsu Siemens gained most market share, rising to 10.6 percent and 6.8 percent of the European market, respectively.

Top European vendor HP's market share slipped to 16.1 percent from 16.4 percent as it faced "profitability challenges," Gartner said.

European number three Acer increased sales by 27.5 percent, growing 35.5 percent year-on-year in the fourth quarter alone and extending its lead in the Emea mobile PC market.

However, Gartner said it saw growth in the Emea region slowing in 2005 to create what it called a "very challenging environment, which will become even more competitive as IBM/Lenovo reveals its Emea strategy."

Shipments in the Asia-Pacific region grew by 13.1 percent in 2004, driven by the Chinese and Indian markets, Gartner said.

Latin America showed the strongest growth in the fourth quarter, with PC shipments increasing 24.7 percent, which analysts said was due to increased awareness, cheaper and more available credit, lower prices and the appearance of new brands.

Reuters

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G.A. Tower II is located along EDSA in Mandaluyong City, just a few steps away from the Boni Avenue MRT Station. The 30-storey tower offers, [illegible] units with two toilets and bath each, and a loft.

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People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Do business in Vietnam–the right way

THERE was a time, even as recent as the mid-90s, that a person who talked about visiting Vietnam was routinely asked, "Isn't there a war over there?" Although the country and its economy began opening up in 1986 (thanks to the policy of doi moi or economic renovation), not a few company expatriates considered Vietnam a "hardship post" and many an investor were either disappointed or burned by the relatively challenging business environment.

The challenges remain 18 years after doi moi; however, Vietnam has stepped up its learning curve and is now considered one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. Its gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate increased to 7.3 percent in 2003 from 6 percent in 2002 and exports have been on the upswing since 1999. Vietnam is currently the biggest exporter of pepper, the second biggest exporter of coffee, and the third largest exporter of cashews. Imports have likewise increased and totaled $22.5 billion in 2003 compared to $16.8 billion in 2002. Foreign direct investment (FDI) comprised 20 percent of the country's total investment in 2001, and foreign projects continue to pour in-as of March 2002, licenses were granted to over 3,100 foreign projects from 70 countries and valued at $38.1 billion. New services are emerging and expanding rapidly, among them insurance, business development, technology transfer, food manufacturing, personal care and real estate trading.

"The Vietnamese are open to investments in different areas as long as it is mutually beneficial to the investor and the Vietnamese economy," states Ruy Y. Moreno, former country managing partner of Arthur Andersen Vietnam and who has over 10 years experience in doing business in Vietnam. "Part of Vietnam's attractiveness as an investment site is its flexibility in government policies and security."

In recent years, the Vietnamese government has cut down substantially on bureaucratic red tape. For instance, business registration has been decentralized to local governments except in critical sectors like oil and gas.

Vietnam certainly remains alluring to investors and businessmen, especially given its market of 83 million people with an adult literacy rate of 93.1 percent. In fact, trade between Vietnam and the Philippines has been flourishing over the past few years. In 2002, Philippine exports to Vietnam posted a 164-percent increase from the previous year. Philippine imports from Vietnam also grew from $280 million in 2001 to $282 million in 2002. Philippine products subject to counter-trade arrangements include processed food; motorcycle and automotive parts and accessories; construction materials; pharmaceutical products; construction materials; coconut oil; furniture; copper-related products; carrageenan; and personal care products.

To help businessmen and organizations gain a better understanding of how to maximize business opportunities in Vietnam, the Center for Global Best Practices will be holding a seminar titled "Doing Business in Vietnam-The Right Way." This will be on Friday, Jan. 21 at the AIM Conference Center in Makati. Aside from Moreno, other resource speakers will be Dr. Phan Huu Thang, director-general of the Foreign Investment Agency, under the Ministry of Planning and Investment; Dinh Tich, Vietnamese Ambassador to the Philippines; Le Thi Phung, president of FMC Consulting Vietnam; and Nelly Favis-Villafuerte, undersecretary of the Department of Trade and Industry. Interested parties can call 842-7148 or 59 and (0917) 929-5432, or e-mail henry@cgbp.org.

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MEGAWORLD CHAIR QC'S BUSINESSMAN OF THE YEAR

Megaworld Corp chair Andrew Tan (4th from left) receives a special citation as Businessman of the Year at the recent 'Gabi ng Parangal' ceremonies of Quezon City's 65th founding anniversary at the Celebrity Sports Plaza. With him are (from left) Quezon City councilors Dante de Guzman and Bernadette Herrera-Dy, treasurer Victor Endriga, Mayor Sonny Belmonte and Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista. Tan was recognized for his pioneering work on Eastwood City, now a dynamic growth center in Quezon City, and his contributions to generating and enhancing investment and employment opportunities in the city.

THE HUMAN FIGURE

The Positivism art workshop is conducting art lessons on how to draw the human figure for one month. Participants are introduced to the use of pencil, charcoal, soft and oil pastel, and mixed media. Conducted by positivism exponent and painter ER Tagle (shown with students) every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon (starting Jan. 5) at Herald Suites, 2168 Chino Roces Avenue in front of Makati Cinema Square, more inquiries on the workshops can be coursed at 811-2432 or 0927-5522288.

Melatonin: A natural good night's sleep

WE ARE living in hard times, which put everyone in a lot of stress. Just as certain as more taxes and rising cost of gasoline and basic commodities, stress is something that we'll have to reckon with daily. And if we're pushing 40 or older, it's just too bad. At this age, there's a natural sleep-enhancing, anti-stress hormone, of which many may be deficient in already.

According to Russel Reiter of the Center University of Texas Health-Science Center, melatonin hormone, which is secreted cyclically from the pineal gland at the center of the brain, keeps us in sync with the rhythms of the day and the season.

One loses his or her melatonin hormone as one's biological clock keeps ticking, thus, the need to replenish it with natural supplements.

One's melatonin level is at its peak at six years of age. The first sharp decline is after puberty when one is about 16 years old. Adults at age 45 secrete only half as much as children. When one becomes 80, melatonin production comes in trickles. This is why we seem to sleep less as we grow older. Many think this is normal or physiologic. But the low levels of melatonin may very well explain why the elderly have increased number of pains and degenerative illnesses.

Surprisingly, melatonin, which has been available in the local market for seven years now, has gained raves in the United States for its efficacy both as a nutritional supplement and as a non-habit forming sleep-enhancing or sleep-aid pill. It does not have the hangover of a regular sleeping pill. The local Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) has registered it as a food supplement.

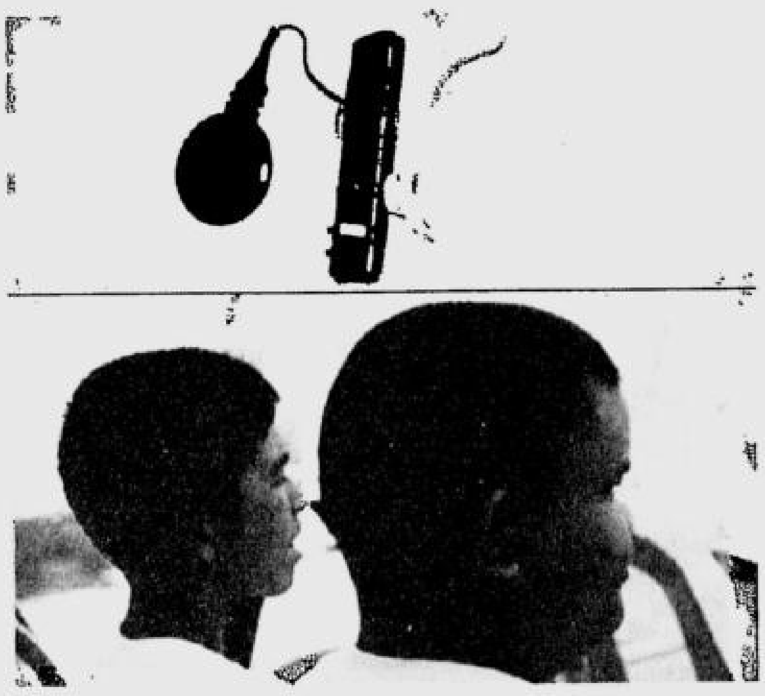
Like most animals, human beings produce melatonin abundantly throughout early life. But the levels in our blood wane slightly during or after puberty and spiral down gradually as we age, said Dr. Walter Pierpaoli, an Italian immunologist.

In one of his experiments, he gave the melatonin hormone to rodents and restored their youthful levels. They outlived their life expectancies by nearly a third. Many believe that it may also have an anti-aging and life-prolonging effect in humans.

Pierpaoli and Dr. William Regeson, in their book "The Melatonin Miracle," said: "Melatonin can stop the downward spiral that we have come to associate with aging."

The Philippine distributor of Melatonin-T, Trianon International, endorses it as "an aid to sleep problems, making one enjoy deep, restful sleep and waking up the next day feeling relaxed."

Trianon Melatonin-T is classified as an over-the-counter food supplement, and is available in Mercury Drug and Watson drug stores nationwide.



MED-EL INTRODUCES COCHLEAR IMPLANT SYSTEM

Medical Electronics (Med-El), a European company specializing in the latest hearing technology, opens up a world of possibilities for the hearing impaired. The Combi 40+ Cochlear Implant System (shown at top) enables users to hear more environmental sounds, helps in improving their communication skills, and ensures their safety by alerting them to traffic, sirens and alarms. Shown are children-recipients enjoying the invaluable benefits of Med-El's Cochlear Implant System.

Valentine Jazz cruise by the bay

VALENTINE'S Day is one of the most celebrated occasions. Valentine's Day is a festivity of the hearts where people find a special time to be together. The day of chocolates, wines and roses will soon be marked again on everybody's calendar, and for sure, expensive restaurants, hotels and party clubs will be fully packed.

Red Hot Events and Orange Tours & Travel will unfold this rare Valentine dinner concert cruise dubbed "Jazz on the Bay" on Feb. 13. Experience a different kind of evening with cool jazz music, and cruising on a luxury yacht along Manila Bay. Make a date with the country's top caliber performers and feel the cool sea breeze in a romantic night.

Enjoy an exotic rendezvous with your loved one on board a first class cruise around Manila Bay and gaze at the captivating beauty of the moon. Make your reservations now, there's no other Valentine's date like this. For inquiries, call Orange Tours & Travel at 924-1957, 434-3879, 436-8801 or 0926-6210439 and 0921-3508448. E-mail orangetrvl@hotmail.com.

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Thule's line of roof boxes and accessories are on display at its showroom at the Equitable Bank Building Ortigas Avenue corner Roosevelt Streets, Greenhills, San Juan or call 744-6367, or log in to www.thule.com for inquiries.

Bits Clips

Columbarium rises

A ONE-OF-A-KIND edifice at the heart of Villamor Air Base in Pasay City, the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Shrine and Columbarium, is now being constructed, announced real estate developer Magnificat Ventures Corp. The shrine, which will be completed in 2006, is envisioned to be a solemn and inspiring refuge for the devotees of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face. Reflecting the saint's simplicity, the Shrine will have no grand altar. Instead, the most solemn image of Jesus Christ will be enthroned at the center. Big enough to comfortably seat 1,600 devotees, the shrine's full audio and video capabilities will guarantee very moving religious celebrations. Meanwhile, the 38,000-vault St. Therese of the Child Jesus Columbarium provides an alternative to traditional interment. The Columbarium is a permanent, elegant, and appropriate depository of "cremains", or cremated remains. For more information, call Magnificat Ventures Corp at 635-4680, 635-4482, 635-4527, and 636-6279, or log on to www.sttheresesshrine.com.

'Be One of Us' DSP-ASG forum

THE DEMENTIA Society of the Philippines (DSP) and its Allied Specialists Group (ASG) celebrates its 3rd anniversary with a scientific forum on "Comprehensive Care of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias" on Jan. 22, 3 p.m. to 10 p.m., at the Amorsolo Ballroom, 4th floor, Holiday Inn Hotel (Galleria Suites), Robinsons Complex, Ortigas, Pasig City. This is free for DSP members and for ASG members composed of psychologists, physical and occupational therapists, nurses, speech therapists, social workers and nutritionists. Registration fee of P150 for non-members covers dinner and snacks. The Theme: "Be One of Us" is meant to draw concern for Filipino elderly, especially those with dementia. Topics include: 1. Psychological testing in the elderly; 2. Clinical staging and management; 3. Pharmocotherapy of psychiatric symptoms; 4. Managing Caregivers' stress; 5. Therapeutic Caregiving (Nurses); 6. Improving mobility and maintaining ADLs (PT/OT); 7. Enhancing communication, and: 8. Social Assessment and Tapping Community Resources.

E. Excel business summit

LEARN all about the business scenario in the Philippines today with firsthand information from experienced entrepreneurs. Secure your family's future by saving up for your retirement fund today, with your very own People's Franchise. These and many other burning issues will be the core of E. Excel leaders' presentations at the business summit, which will be held Jan. 22 at Conference Rooms A and B of the SM Megatrade Hall, 5th level, Megamall Building B, at 1:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to this free business seminar. For inquiries, call E. Excel Philippines at 811-0837.

DLSU-M hosts young economist confab

DE LA Salle University-Manila Economics Organization, together with the Junior Philippine Economic Society (JPES) holds the 4th Young Economists Convention on Jan. 21 and 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Angelo King International Conference Center, Malate, Manila. With the theme "Philippine Participation in the International Economic Scene", the two-day conference aims to instill awareness on the significance of the position of the Philippines in the international economic scene. The YEC gathers the best economics students from all over the country to discuss critical national, social and political issues in an economic perspective. Interested parties may call Malou Caluma (526-4237) or Aileen Gaelon (524-5333/524-5369).

Kamayan forum

THE RECENT calamities in the Philippines and nearby countries have given rise to an atmosphere of negativity, of helplessness, anguish, anxiety, remorse, and finger-pointing. This and related matters will be the focus of discussions and sharing at the session on Jan 21, of Kamayan para sa Kalikasan monthly environmental forum. It will run from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., with free lunch courtesy of Kamayan Restaurant Edsa, consistent venue and full sponsor since March 1990. The forum is co-convened by the Clear Communicators for the Environment (Clear) and Sanib-lakas ng Inang Kalikasan (Salika). Everyone is invited. Admission is free.

EWB raffle today

THE MUCH-awaited grand draw of East West Bank's Car & Cash Frenzy Promo has been moved from Jan. 15 to Jan. 21. A brand new Nissan Sentra 1.3. GX M/T will be given away as the grand prize. Other prizes at stake include digital camera, desktop computers, TV with DVD and other major home appliances from Abenson Inc. Five sets of Smart Buddy Nokia 6610i phonekits also await the lucky winners. For inquiries on the raffle draw, call 8-ACCESS (822-2377). Approved by DTI NCR per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3392, Series of 2004.

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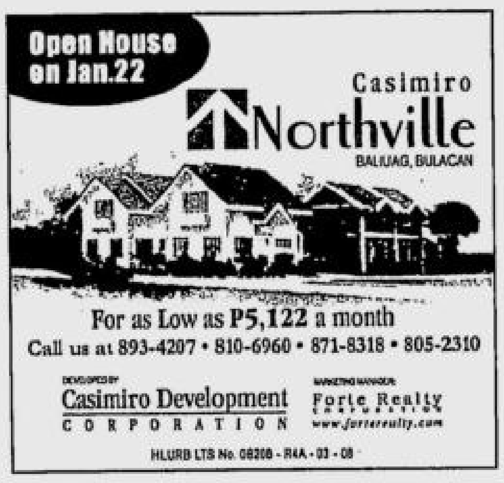
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1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

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ELECTRICALS; VALVES & FITTINGS; POWER TOOLS/HAND TOOLS; OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT; MISCELLANEOUS, ETC.

ELECTRICAL - ABB, FUJI, WESTINGHOUSE, MITSUBISHI High Capacity Circuit Breakers; MERLIN-GERIN Micro Circuit Breakers; BITICINO Socket Outlets; Switches; Housings; Capacitors; High Tension Wires; Telecommunication Cables; Dry Type Transformers; Mini Transformers
VALVES & FITTINGS - SPIRAX SARCO Motorized Valves; Wye Strainers; Stainless Elbows & Tees; Large Cap. Gate Valves; Globe Valves; Fiber Glass Fittings
POWER TOOLS/HAND TOOLS - MAKINA Carving Machine; MAKITA Drill & Grinder Sets; BLACK & DECKER Electric Drills; BALDWIN Pipe Threaders; GREENFIELD Socket Wrench Sets; Pipe Wrenches; Vice Grips; Hacksaws; Bolt Cutters, Bottle Jacks; HIKOMA Manlifts
OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT - Steel Filing Cabinets; Steel Lockers; Wooden Office Tables; Computer Tables; Swivel Chairs; Wooden Cabinets
MISCELLANEOUS - PERKINS 90KVA Diesel Generator; HAKO Ride-on Floor Polisher; Industrial Blowers; TIGEAR Gear Motors; Air Compressors; Chain Blocks; Pull-down Accordion Doors; Pedestal Drills; Band Saws; King Size Bed Set; Lamp Shades; Airconditioners, etc.

On View: Monday 24th January 2005 - 9am to 5pm & morning of sale day
Refundable Deposit: Php20,000 (upon registration)
Please bring valid ID to be presented during registration
For further information please contact Carol Cosca at Tel: 049 831 6541
Email: carol.cosca@henrybutcher.com

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2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

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2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/out taking car 5315577

2% w/out taking car 6567685

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of late Hilario Lao-ing aka Luciano Hilario C. Lao-ing was extrajudicially settled by the heirs with Special Power of Attorney as per Doc. 219 Page 38 Book 476 Series 2005 before Notary Public Jose L. Ma. Santos of Quezon City.
PDI-Jan. 14, 21 & 28, 2005

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LEONARDO M. PAULE has been extra-judicially settled by his heirs as per Doc. No. 125; Page No. 26; Book VIII; Series of 2004 before Notary Public Atty. Maria Zarah R. Villanueva.
(PDI-January 7, 14& 21, 2005)

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"Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of the Lord." Matthew 25:21

DR. LOURDES QUISUMBING ROXAS

May 16, 1926 – January 15, 2005

Daughter of **NATIONAL SCIENTIST Dr. Eduardo Arguelles Quisumbing**
and **Mrs. Basilisa Lim**, daughter of **Gen. Vicente Lim**

UP College of Medicine 1950; CHARTER MEMBER
UP Delta Lambda Phi.

Her bereaved family, husband Rotary Int. Dist 380 Governor and SIGMA RHO Grand Archon Atty. Ruben L. Roxas (†), **children** Associate Justice Vicente and Atty. Nancy Sison, Eduardo and Carol Coreces, Alejandro (†), Roberto (†), Dr. Evangeline, Ma. Rebecca (†) and Bernardo Gonzalez, Angel and Merceditas Rodis, and Ruben Jr., **grandchildren** Vic-vic, Vinch, Victor Jon, Nancy Kathleen, Porfirio; Miko & Baby, Mitchie, Robby, Gingin, Christie Ann; Richie, Patrick, Gia, Paula; Kristel, Cara, Pocholo; Kimo, Jerry, Teddy, Maica, Benz; Nic, Niski, **sister** Delicia, **brothers** Dr. Honorato (Rety) (†) and Eduardo Jr. (†), **cherished friends** Bing, Bobby Lim, Vicky, Ampao, Lil, Pacing, Aida, Totsie Q., Aning and other **relatives** and **friends** request the pious reader to please pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her cremated remains are at the Santuario de San Jose Chapel, Greenhills. Mass is held daily at 8 pm until the 10 am mass on Sunday, January 23.

In lieu of flowers, donations to Dr. Ludi's Rotary projects for the handicapped would be appreciated.

ABEL L. NOSCE, SR.

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 18, 2005 at the age of 79.

His loving wife **Aurora**; children **Rico** and **Lissa, Maridel** and **Dodie, Abel, Jr.** and **Dedette, Minette** and **Chris,** and **Maribi**; grandchildren **Nicholas, Ranscee, Joshua, Ambea, Alexandra,** and **Simone**; relatives and close friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Jose Rizal Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 23, 2005 at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

MAGDALENA MORRO DE ROMERO-SALAS

Fallecio el 17 de diciembre de 2004

La misa por su eterno descanso se celebrara el proximo sabado, dia 22 de enero a las 9:00 a.m. en la Capilla del Colegio de San Agustin, Dasmariñas Village, Makati City.

Sus desconsolados hijos **Jose Luis (Pocholo) Remedios (Remy), Guillermo (Billy) Rosario (Chary), † Luis Jr. (Chiquito) Ester, Jaime y Ophelia** junto a los nietos y visnietos ruegan una oracion por el eterno descanso de su alma.

Our family announces with deep sorrow the passing of our beloved father

MR. GLADINO N. GRAGEDA

January 25, 1936 – January 17, 2005

His remains lie in state at St. Paul of the Cross Parish Memorial Chapel, SSS Village Concepcion Dos, Marikina City.

Cremation will be on January 22, 2005 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 11:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

His family and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Our Dearly Beloved

CARLOS "Charlie" GONDA GAMO, JR.

Born on July 18, 1923 has joined
our risen Lord and loving Savior
Jesus Christ after completion of his Life
on Earth on the 8th day of January 2005
at Los Angeles California, USA.

He is survived by his beloved wife **Irene Caparas Gamo**; children **Miriam, Ruth, Christine, Carlos III & Irene Shiela**; daughter-in-law **Cristina** and son-in-law **David**, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

We wish to inform relatives and friends that his body will arrive on January 20, 2005 A.M.

Church services shall be conducted in his honor on the afternoons of January 20 and January 21 to be held at the Community Baptist Church of Las Piñas at 38 Sonata St., Sta. Cecilia Village, Las Piñas City.

Interment will be held on January 22, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park Sucat, Parañaque following the 1:00 p.m. service and program at the same church.

WE DESIGN OBITUARY FOR FREE.

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

EMILIA "MILING" PANGANIBAN CRUZ

Beloved widow of Dr. Jose "Pepe" Roldan Cruz (†)

Peacefully joined her Creator
on January 18, 2005 at the age of 91.

Her children **Josefina** and **Benjamin Pecache, Jose Jr. "Lito"** and **Ma. Paz Licauco, Edgardo** and **Zenaida Baluyut, Victoria** and **Caesar Rasalan**; grandchildren **Lissa** and **Jona Sandejas, Pattie Pecache, Tina** and **Mike Marcelo, Joel Pecache, Anna** and **PM Montilla, Mari** and **Bea Cruz, Karen** and **Lloyd Joven, Gary Cruz, Mike Rasalan, Ria Rasalan**; great-grandchildren **EJ, Derrick, Andrea, Clarissa, David, Santi, Alfonso**; relatives and friends request the pious readers for their prayers.

Her remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Jose Parish Hall, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

Interment will be at the Manila South Cemetery in Makati on Sunday, January 23, 2005 after the 9:00 am Mass.

JOSEFINA B. CECILIO

of Baao and Naga City

Peacefully and joyfully joined her Creator on January 17, 2005 at age 84.

She is survived by her children and in-laws SALVADOR CECILIO, JR., MD., JOSE and ANA CECILIO, SR. VIOLETA, DC, NANCY and OSCAR (†) dela CRUZ, MARGIE and HANS NESSL, BESS and JOEY UYBARRETA; and grandchildren, SAL, ERIC, JENNY and VINCENT, JONATHAN, NEIL, RALPH (†), MARY JUNE and THERESE, JAYCEE, KRISTA and KATRINA.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City and will be brought home to Naga City on Sunday, January 23, 2005 at the Imperial Funeral Home.

Interment at the Peñafrancia Cemetery after the Funeral Mass on Monday, January 24, 2005 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peñafrancia at 8 o'clock in the morning.

We request for prayers for her eternal repose.

The Board of Directors, Officers and Staff of

LYRIC PIANO & ORGAN CORPORATION

Extend its deepest sympathy and condolences
to the bereaved family of

FLORENTINA V. PANGANIBAN

Former Treasurer & Board Member

who peacefully joined her Creator on January 20, 2005.

She is survived by her loving HUSBAND, **Severo**;
CHILDREN, **Cesar & Gilda, Joy & Egay, Roy & Gina**;
GRANDCHILDREN, **Maisie Anne, Cesar Jr., Krishelle, CJ, Allan Dave, Bradley, Kevin Ross, Katrina Ashley** and **Arianne Jane**.

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Maria Della Strada Church, Pansol, Katipunan Ave., Balara, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 23, 2005
at Ever Memorial, Lawang Bato, Valenzuela,
Metro Manila after the 2:00 p.m. Mass
at Sta. Maria Della Strada Church.

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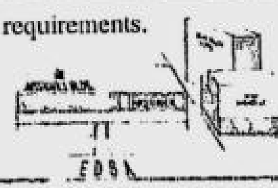

1939 – 2004

PASASALAMAT

Mga Minamahal naming mga kaibigan
at kababayan,
Maraming salamat sa inyong
pakikiramay at pagdadalamhati
sa pagyao ng ating minamahal na
si Ronnie.
Ang inyong pagmamahal sa kanya
ay nagbigay ng tibay ng loob sa aming
lahat na tanggapin ng maluwag sa
dibdib ang kanyang biglaang paglisan.
Pumanaw man siya lagi siyang
mananatiling buhay sa ating puso.

Nagmamahal,
Susan at ang pamilya Poe

Handog sa ika-40 na araw ng kanyang paglisan, Sabado, Enero 22, ang mga misang gaganapin sa:

NCR: St. Pancratius Parish/Grace Park, Caloocan City • Our Lady of Grace Parish/Grace Park, Caloocan City • Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish/ Grace Park, Caloocan City • San Jose Parish/Caloocan City • Mary Help of Christian Parish/Maypajo, Caloocan City • Roman Catholic Bishop of Caloocan San Exequiel Moreno Parish/Caloocan City • Sagrada Familia Parish/Caloocan City • San Roque Cathedral/Caloocan City • Ina ng Laging Saklolo/Marulas, Caloocan City • St. Gabriel/Caloocan City • St. Joseph/Las Pinas City • Our Lady of the Pillar/Las Pinas • San Bartolome/Malabon (5:30 pm) • San Antonio De Padua/Malabon • Immaculate/Malabon • Sto. Rosario Parish/Malabon • St. Peter and John/Malabon • Exallation of the Holy Cross/Malabon • Alfonsus de Ligouri/Magallanes, Makati City • Don Bosco/Greenbelt, Makati City • Nstra. Sra. de Guadalupe/Makati City • Holy Eucharist/Makati City • St. Andrew/Greenbelt, Makati City • San Ildefonso/Pio del Pilar, Makati City • Holy Family/San Isidro, Makati City • St. Joseph the Worker/Palanan, Makati City • Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine/Makati City (12nn & 6pm) • Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park,Makati (12:15 pm) • Tent City of God/AFP Oval, Fort Bonifacio • Our Lady of the Abandoned/Marikina City • San Antonio de Padua/Marikina City • Immaculate Concepcion /Marikina City • Our Lady of Natividad/Marikina City • San Antonio de Padua Parish/Kalumpang, Marikina City • San Isidro/Labrador, Bgy. Nangka, Marikina • Our Lady of Edsa/Mandaluyong City (12:15 pm) • San Felipe Neri/Boni, Mandaluyong City • St. Francis/Shaw Blvd, Mandaluyong City • St. Jerome/Ayala, Alabang, Mandaluyong City • Divine Mercy/Mandaluyong City • Eucharistic Lord Chapel/SM Megamall, Mandaluyong (12:15 & 6pm) • Our Lady of Loreto /Bustillos, Sampaloc, Manila • Sta. Monica/Bustillos, Sampaloc, Manila • San Roque/Blumentritt, Manila • Our Lady of Penafrancia/Pandacan, Manila • St. Anthony of Padua/Singalong, Manila • Quiapo Church/ Manila (9 am) • Sto. Nino de Tondo/Tondo, Manila • San Rafael/Balut, Tondo, Manila • Sta. Monica /Dagupan, Tondo, Manila • Don Bosco/Road 10, Tondo, Manila • St. Joseph's/Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila • Immaculate Concepcion/Tayuman, Tondo, Manila • Don Bosco/Bo. Magsaysay, Tondo, Manila • Holy Trinity/Sampaloc, Manila • Nuestra Sra. de Remedios/Malate, Manila • Our Lady Purification/Divisoria, Manila • San Roque Parish/Navotas • San Ildefonso Parish/Navotas • San Jose de Navotas Parish/Navotas • San Lorenzo Parish/Navotas • Parish of Sta. Cruz/Tansa, Navotas • Parokya ni San Antonio de Padua/Kalumpang, Marikina City • San Isidro/Labrador, Brgy. Nangka, Marikina City • St. James the Great/Ayala, Alabang, Muntinlupa (5:30 pm) • San Roque/Alabang, Muntinlupa • Sta. Clara/Pasay City • Sta. Rosa de Lima/Ugong, Pasig City • Sto. Rosario/Rosario, Pasig City • Holy Family/Bo. Kapitolyo, Pasig City • Immaculate Concepcion/Pasig City • St. Lucia Parish/Mangahan, Pasig City • Our Lady of Perpetual Help/Baclaran, Paranaque • Mary Help of Christians/Better Living, Paranaque • The Risen Christ/Moonwalk, Paranaque City • Holy Eucharist/Moonwalk, Paranaque City • San Agustin/Moonwalk, Paranaque City • San Roque Parish/Pateros (7 pm) • San Antonio De Padua Parish/San Francisco Del Monte,Q.C. • San Pedro Bautista/San Francisco Del Monte, Q.C • Christ the King/E. Rodriguez, Q.C. • Santo Domingo/Quezon Ave., Q.C. • Lord of Divine Mercy/Sikatuna Village, Q.C. • Mabuting Pastol/MRB Complex, Commonwealth, Q.C. • Christ the King/Veterans' Village, Proj. 7, Q.C. • Dela Strada Parish/La Vista, Q.C. • Our Lady of Pentecost/Loyola Heights, Q.C. • Holy Sacrifice Parish/UP Diliman, Q.C. • Holy Family/Kamias, Q.C. • Christ the King /Proj. 7, Q.C. • St. Peter Parish/Commonwealth, Q.C. • Sacred Heart/Kamuning, Q.C. • Christ the King /Green Meadows, Q.C. • Immaculate Concepcion/Greenfields, Novaliches, Q.C. •Immaculate Concepcion Cathedral/Cubao, Q.C. (6am & 530 pm) • Siena College Chapel/ Siena, Q.C. (6:30 am) • Lourdes/Lourdes, Q.C. • Mt. Carmel /New Manila, Q.C. (6am & 6pm) • Church of Transfiguration/18th Ave., Cubao, Q.C. • Nativity/Cubao, Q.C. • Carmelite Sisters/Gilmore, Q.C. (6:30am) • Christ the King/E. Rodriguez, Q.C. • Sta. Rita de Cascen /Philam Homes, Q.C. • Most Holy Redeemer Parish/Masambong, Q.C • Mowelfund Plaza/Rosario Drive, QC • North Cemetery/La Loma, QC (4 pm) • Mary the Queen/Greenhills, San Juan • Santuario de San Jose/Greenhills, San Juan (7:15pm) • Pinaglabanan/San Juan •Tent City of GodAFP Oval Village, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig • Bayan ni Maria Parish/ Lower Bicutan, Taguig • Pinagsama Village/western Bicutan/Taguig •St. Agustine/Lower Bicutan, Taguig • Holy Family Parish/Bagumbayan, Taguig • Nat'l Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima/Valenzuela (6, 7 am & 6:30 pm) **CAR:** St. Paul Mission/Tuba, Benguet • St. Joseph's/Sabangan, Mt. Province • St. James Cathedral/Bangued, Abra (6am & 5am) **REGION I:** St. John the Baptist/Badoc, Ilocos Norte (6:30am) • St. Andrew/Bacarra, Ilocos Norte (6am) • St. Joseph/Dingras, Ilocos Norte (5pm) • Sta. Monica/Sarrat, Ilocos Norte (6:30am) • St. Augustine/Paoay, Ilocos Norte (6:30am) • St. Augustine/Bantay, Ilocos Sur (5:30am) • St. Lucy Parish/Narvacan, Ilocos Sur • St. Catherine de Alexandria/Santa, Ilocos Sur (5:30am) • St. Paul Metropolitan Catholic Church/Vigan, Ilocos Sur (6am & 5pm) • St. John the Baptist/San Juan, La Union • St. Williams Cathedral/ San Fernando, La Union (6am) • St. Peter and St. Paul/Bauang, La Union (6 am) • St. Jude Thaddeus Parish/San Fernando, La Union (6:30 am) • St. Catherine Parish/Luna, La Union (6:30 am) • Our Lady of Manaoag/Manaoag, Pangasinan (11 am) • Retreat Center/Pangasinan **REGION II:** Our Lady of Piat Basilica/Piat, Cagayan (8am) • St. Peter's Cathedral/Tuguegarao, Cagayan {8am) • St. Peter/Aparri, Cagayan • Our Lady of Salette/Brgy. Vira, Isabela • Our Lady of the Pillar/Cauayan City, Isabela **REGION III:** Sta. Cruz/Paco, Obando, Bulacan • San Pascual Baylon/Obando, Bulacan • San Nicolas/Hagonoy, Bulacan • Gatbuch Citadel/Calumpit, Bulacan • Sta. Ana Church/Hagonoy, Bulacan • Francisco Homes Parish/San Jose del Monte, Bulacan • Sto. Nino/Mecauayan, Bulacan • Club House, Milflora Homes/Sabang, Baliuag, Bulacan • Dambana/Cabanatuan (8am) • San Agustin/Jaen, Nueva Ecija (5 pm) • Sto. Nino de Paz/Nueva Ecija • San Sebastian/Nueva Ecija • Sta. Rosa De Lima/Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija • Christ the King/Gapan, Nueva Ecija • San Antonio Del Carmen/San Fernando, Pampanga • Virgen delos Remedios/San Fernando, Pampanga **REGION IV:** Our Lady Mary Mediatrix of All Grace/Lipa City,Batangas (11:45 am) • Cathedral of San Sebastian/Lipa City, Batangas (8 am) • Imaculada Concepcion/Batangas City • Nuestra Senora del Buen Viaje/Antipolo City, Rizal • San Jose de Ampid/San Mateo, Rizal • Antipolo Cathedral/Antipolo City (6,7,8,9,10,11 am & 6,7 pm) • Holy Rosary/Amaya, Tanza, Cavite • San Roque/Cavite City • Muslim Village Mosque/Brgy. Datu Ismael, Dasmarinas, Cavite • St. Jude Parish/Trece Martirez, Cavite • St. Magdalene /Magdalena, Laguna • St. Anthony/Magdalena, Laguna • San Isidro Labrador/Binan, Laguna • St. Peter/Sta. Rosa, Laguna •Holy Cross Chapel/Puerto Princesa City, Palawan (5:30pm) • Parish of San Fernando Bautista/Candelaria, Quezon (6:00 am) • St. Isidore/Lucena, Quezon (6am) • St. Ferdinand Cathedral/Lucena, Quezon (6am) • St. Jude Thaddeus Shrine/Lucena, Quezon (6:15am) • Our Lady of Mt. Carmel/Lucena, Quezon (6:30am) • Our Lady of Lourdes/Lucena, Quezon (6am) • Holy Rosary Chapel/Lucena, Quezon (6:30am) • St.Veronica /Lucena, Quezon (6am) • St. Joseph/Baras, Rizal • San Ildefonso/Tanay, Rizal • St. Jerome/Morong, Rizal • Immaculate Concepcion, Rizal • Sacred Heart/ Tayuman, Binangonan, Rizal • Our Lady of Lights/Cainta, Rizal • Sacred Heart/Tayuman, Binangonan, Rizal • Our Lady of Lights /Cainta, Rizal • St. Joseph-Central/San Jose, Occidental Mindoro • St. Joseph Parish/San Jose, Occidental Mindoro • San Pedro/Rizal, Occidental Mindoro • St. Michael/Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro • Mabuting Pastol/Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro • Sta. Teresa/Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro • San Sebastian/Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro • San Lorenzo Ruiz (Ligaya)/Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro • St. Joseph (Pag-asa)/Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro • Holy Cross/Sta. Cruz, Occidental Mindoro • Our Lady Pilar/Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro • St. Joseph/Paluan, Occidental Mindoro • San Raphael/Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro • Our Lady of Assumption/Lubang, Occidental Mindoro • San Isidro Labrador (Tagbac)/Lubang, Occidental Mindoro • San Nicolas de Tolentino (Tilik)/Lubang, Occidental Mindoro **REGION V:** St. Anne/Albay • St. Joaquin/Malinao, Albay • St. John the Baptist/Tabaco, Albay (7am) • Holy Family Parish/Tabaco, Albay (6am) • St. Gregory the Great Seminary/Tabaco, Albay (6am) • Our Lady of Lourdes Parish/Tabaco, Albay (6am) • St. Peter Parish/Vinzons, Camarines Norte (6:00 am) • San Antonio de Padua Parish/Mercedes, Camarines Norte (6 pm) • St. John the Baptist/Daet, Camarines Norte (6:30 am) • St. John the Baptist/Daet,Cam. Norte (5:30 am) • St. Raphael the Archangel/Basud, Cam. Norte (5:30 am) • St. Philip the Apostle/San Felipe, Cam. Norte (5:30 pm) • St. Vincent Ferrer/San Vicente, Cam. Norte • St. Lorenzo de Manila/San Lorenzo Ruiz, Cam. Norte • St. Anthony of Padua /Mercedes, Cam. Norte (530pm) • St. Francis of Assisi/Talisay, Cam. Norte (5:30 pm) • St. John the Apostle and Evangelist/Labo, Cam. Norte (5:30 pm) • Holy Trinity Parish/Bato, Cam Sur (5 pm) • St. Mary Magdalene/Bula, Cam Sur • St. Francis of Assisi/Buhi, Cam Sur • St. John the Baptist/Goa, Cam Sur (5 pm) • St. Anthony of Padua/Iriga City • St. John the evangelist/Naga City • St. Bernard Abbot Parish/Ocampo,Cam Sur • St. Andrew the Apostle/Sagnay,Cam Sur • St. Joseph Parish/San Jose, Cam Sur (5 pm) • St. Bartholomew Parish/Tigaon, Cam Sur (5 pm) • Immaculate Conception/Conception, Pequena, Naga City (530 pm) • Our Lady of Penafrancia/Naga City (530 pm) • St. Raphael the Arcangel/Pili, Cam Sur (530 pm) • Rector, Penafrancia Basilica/Minore, Naga City (5 pm) • Metropolitan Cathedral (St. John the Evangelist)/Naga, Cam. Sur • St. Francis Parish/Talisay, Cam. Sur (9:00 am) • St. Gregory the Great Cathedral/Legaspi, Albay (6:30am & 5:30 pm) • Our Lady of Immaculate Concepcion/Masbate • St. Anthony de Padua Cathedral/Masbate, Masbate (6:15 am) • Our Lady of Immaculate Conception/Virac, Catanduanes(5:30 am) • St. Peter and St. Paul Cathedral/Sorsogon (5:30 pm) • Our Lady of Fatima Parish/Sorsogon City • Our Lady of Anunciation/Bacon, Sorsogon City • St. Raymond Nonnatus/Guinlajon, Sorsogon City • St. Roche Parish/ Bacon, Sorsogon City • St. Anthony of Padua Parish/Gubat, Sorsogon City (5:15 pm) • St. Joseph Parish/Barcelona, Sorsogon City (6 am) • St. James the Greater/Bulusan, Sorsogon City (530 am) • St. Lawrence Parish/Prieto Diaz, Sorsogon (6 am) • Immaculate Conception Parish/Bulan, Sorsogon (5:15 pm) • Holy Infant Jesus Parish/Matnog, Sorsogon (6 am) • St. Mary Magdalene Parish/Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon (5 am) • St. Joseph Parish/Gabao, Sorsogon (5:30 pm) • St. Anthony of Padua Parish/Juban, Sorsogon (5:30 am) • Holy Rosary Parish/Casiguran, Sorsogon (6 am) • Our Lady of Mt. Carmel/Magallanes,Sorsogon • Our Lady of Pillar/Pilar, Sorsogon (5:30 am) • St. Joseph the Worker/Donsol, Sorsogon (5 am) • Most Holy Rosary Parish/Cumadcad, Sorsogon **REGION VI:** St. Francis Xavier/Patria Pandan, Antique • Sta. Maria Catholic/Iloilo City (6pm) • San Sebastian Cathedral/Bacolod City • Queen of Peace /Bacolod City • Carmellite Monastery/Bacolod City • Triumph of the Holy Cross/Bacolod City • University of St. La Salle Chapel/Bacolod City • San Antonio Abad/Bacolod City • San Isidore Labrador.Bacolod City • St. Jude Thaddeus/Bacolod City • Blessed Mother & St. John the Evangelist/Bacolod City (5:30 pm) • Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal/Bacolod City (5:30 pm) • Our Lady of Candles/Capitol Heights,Bacolod City (7 pm) • Immaculate Concepcion Church/ Murcia, Negros Occidental (8 am) • Our Lady of Victory Church/Victoria City • San Roque Church/Bacolod City 6:00 am • St. Joseph the Worker Church/E.B. Magalona, Negros Occidental (6 am) • San Diego Pro-Cathedral/Silay City (5 pm) • San Nicolas de Tolentino Church/Talisay City (5:30 pm) • St. John the Baptist/Bago City (6 am) • Our Lady of Peace/La Carlota City (6:30 pm) • Sta. Maria Magdalena/Hinigaran (5 pm) • Our Lady of Guadalupe/Villadolid • Our Lady of Lourdes/Pulupandan (6 am) • San Isidro Labrador/Binalbagan (4:30 pm) • Our Lady of Sorrows/Himamaylan City (4:30 pm) • St. Francis Xavier/Kabankalan (4:30 pm) • St. Nicolas de Tolentino/Isabela, Negros Occ. (6:30 pm) • St. Vincent Parish/La Castellana (6 am) **REGION VII:** St. Joseph's Cathedral/Tagbilaran City, Bohol (5:15 & 6 pm) • Cebu Cathedral/Cebu City (5pm) • Sacred Heart/Cebu City • Sto. Nino de Cebu/Cebu City • Capitol Parish/Cebu City (5pm) • St. Joseph Mabolo Parish/Cebu (5pm) • St. Vincent Ferrer/Balawbaw, Cebu • St. Catherine of Alexandria Cathedral/Dumaguete City (6pm) • Holy Family Cathedral/Cebu City • Sto. Rosario/ P. del Rosario St., Cebu City **REGION VIII:** St. Michael/Maripipi, Biliran • Our Lady of the Holy Rosary/Naval, Biliran • Our Lady of the Holy Rosary/Cabuegayan, Biliran • St. Nepomuceno/Kawayan, Biliran • St. Raphael/Kawayan, Biliran • St. Vincent Ferrer/Tukdaw, Biliran • Catarman Cathedral/Samar • St. Michael/Gandara, Western Samar • Redemptorist/Tacloban City (5:30pm) • San Rafael Parish/Tacloban City (5:30am) • St. Jude Parish/Tacloban City (5:30am) • Blessed Sacrament Quasi Parish/Tacloban City (5:45am) • Our Lady of Lourdes/ Tacloban City (4:30pm) • Sto. Nino Parish/Tacloban City (5:30pm) • Sacred Heart Parish/Tacloban City (5:30pm) • San Jose Parish/Tacloban City • Fatima Parish/Tacloban City (6:00pm) • St. Peter and Paul Parish/Ormoc City (12:00nn) • Palo Cathedral/Palo, Leyte • St. James the Apostle/Caybiran, Leyte • Our Lady of Good Voyage/Almeria, Leyte • St. Teodore the Worker/Culaba, Leyte • Our Lady of Assumption/Maasim, Southern Leyte • St. Michael/Macrahon, S. Leyte • St. James/Burgos, S. Leyte • Holy Cross/Limasawa, S. Leyte • Sto. Nino/Mautbos, S. Leyte • St. Santiago/Tomas Oppus, S. Leyte • Immaculate Concepcion/ Sogod, S. Leyte • Immaculate Concepcion/Libagon, S. Leyte • St. Ignacio Loyola/Liloan, S. Leyte • St. Isidore/San Francisco, S. Leyte • St. James/S. Leyte • San Ricardo/Maasin, S. Leyte • St. Michael Archangel/Pintuyan, S. Leyte **REGION IX:** Immaculate Concepcion/Zamboanga City • Metropolitan Cathedral/La Purisima St., Zamboanga City • St. Joseph Parish/Zamboanga City • St. Joseph Cathedral/Prelature of Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay • San Roque Parish/Zamboanga City • Jesus Rapture Ministry/Zamboanga City • Our Lady of Fatima/Zamboanga City **REGION XI:** St. Francis of Assisi/Davao City • Redemptorist /Bajada, Davao • Masjid Jamjom Mosque/Davao • Assumption Parish/Davao City (6 am) • San Pablo Parish/Davao City (6 am) • St. Jude Shrine Parish/Davao City • San Pedro Cathedral Parish /Davao City (5:30 pm) • Sta. Ana Shrine Parish/Davao City (12 nn) • Our Lady of Fatima Parish/Davao City (5:30 pm) • San Antonio De Padua Parish/Davao City (6:30 am) • Redemptorist Church/Davao City • Carmelite Monastery/Davao City • Sta. Ana Shrine/Davao City • Baptist Christian Fellowship United in the Phil./Davao City • St. Paul/Davao City **REGION XII:** Immaculate Concepcion Cathedral/ Quezon Avenue, Cotabato City (5:30am & 5:30pm) • Rosary Heights Parish/Ramon Rabago St., Cotabato City • Queen of Peace/S.K. Pendatun St., Cotabato City (6:15am) • Masjid Abas Mosque/Cotabato City • Masjid Madina/Pikit, North Cotabato • St. Anthony Parish-Diocese of Marbel, Koronadal City, South Cotabato (5:15pm) • Massid Mohmin Mosque/Isulan, South Cotabato • San Carlos Borromeo Parish/Isulan, Sultan Kudarat (5:30am) • Masjid Jihadi Mosque/Katuli, Sultan Kudarat • Holy Cross Parish/Gen. Santos City (6:30 am) • St. Peter and Paul/Gen. Santos City (5:30 am) • Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage/Gen. Santos City (12nn) • St. Michael/Gen. Santos City (5:30 am) **REGION 13:** Sto. Nino Shrine/Libertad, Butuan City • San Vicente/Agusan del Sur • Sacred Heart Parish/San Francisco, Agusan del Sur • St. Michael Parish/Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur • St. Ignatius de Loyola Parish/Esperanza, Agusan del Sur **ARRM:** San Raphael/Looc, Sulu • Nuestra Senora Dela Candelaria Parish/ Tacorong City (5:30 am) **OVERSEAS:** St. Antonio De Padua Church/Ontario, Canada (7 am) • Canada Church/Quebec, Canada • Mission Dolores/San Francisco , Calif. (8 am) • St. Catherine of Siena/Burlingame, Calif. (12:15 nn) • St. Elizabeth/Van Nuys, Calif. (10 am) • St. Cyril of Jerusalem/ Sherman Oaks, Calif. (7:30 am) • Our Lady of Lebanon /Beverly Hills, Calif. (8 am) • Good Shepherd/Beverly Hills, Calif. (8 am) • St. Anthony San Gabriel/West Covina,Calif. (5:00 pm) • St. Martha/West Covina, Calif. (12:00 nn) • Basilica of the Immaculate Conception/Washington DC, • St. Leo the Great Parish/Fairfax, Virginia, (5pm) • St. Joseph/Garden Rd., Hong Kong • St. Jude/Northpoint, Hong Kong • St. Therese Church/Mascot N.S.W. Australia (10:30am)• St. Margarette/Happy Valley, Hong Kong

(Ang oras ng misa sa karamihan ng mga simbahan ay ika-6 ng gabi; ang mga misa sa ibang oras ay nakatala)

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"Listen. We can convey no greater honor than to actually hear what our customer has to say."
Philip Crosby's "Reflections on Quality"
Maybank

FARMERS' INCOME RISE TREMENDOUSLY

Bicolano creates unique products from waste

By Michael B. Jaucian
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

GUINOBATAN, Albay—Determined to help poor farmers, an agriculture engineer trained his eye on a waste product and created not only a source of livelihood but a product that helps the environment.

Justino Arboleda, 54, created a soil erosion control net or coconet out of coconut husks which used to be treated as waster materials.

Arboleda developed coconet under his business venture, the Juboken Enterprise, located at Barangay Gapo in Camalig town.

Established in 1995, Juboken is now the number one exporter of the soil erosion control net.

Its present markets are Japan, China, Europe, Germany and the United States of America.

P80,000 capital

Arboleda, a doctorate degree holder in agriculture engineering from the Tokyo University in Japan and the longest serving dean of the Bicol University College of Agriculture and Forestry (Bucaf) in this town, started with an P80,000 capital and a decorticating machine—a milling machine used in extracting cocofiber, which he borrowed from the Canadian government.

According to him, since he started the coconut husk business in September 1995 after resigning as Bucaf dean, at least 1,650 families have been benefiting from the coconut husk business not only in Bicol but also in other parts of the country.

About 800 families are in Albay, 400 in Mindanao, 150 in Aklan and 300 in Southern Leyte.

Arboleda discloses that every family served by the Juboken earns at least P200 a day.

Low income, no training

The idea of helping improve the life of farmers, especially coconut farmers, came up as result of Arboleda's study on poverty in Bicol, which he conducted in 1989.

He found out that for every one hectare of coconut plantation a farmer was tending, his income per month was as low as P800, which was not sufficient for buying the family's basic needs.

The agriculture engineer also found out, among other concerns, that only a few families of coconut farmers had a complete set of kitchen wares at home.

Arboleda wondered why the coconut farmers remained poor despite the vast supply of coconuts in the area.

He further discovered that farmers had a poor knowledge in coconut farming.

"With poor knowledge in farming, normally they do know what to do with their farms; that is the very reason why most of them engage only in copra making, which is very tedious," Arboleda says.

According to him, out of 600,000 farmers in the country less than 8,000 have received training in farming.

And so, with his experience and further knowledge, he taught coconut farmers how to maximize the use of coconuts by making other products, especially out of coconut husks.

PHOTO BY NINO JESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

ARBOLEDA with a coconet

Unique products

Arboleda says the coconut husks can be turned into useful and unique variety of products.

And according to him, among the coconut husk products, the coconet, which costs P50 per square meter, is the most patronized in local and international market.

He says the Juboken Enterprise produces at least 30,000 sqm of coconet a month. Although, he added, the production of coconet depends on the construction season.

Aside from the soil erosion control net, Arboleda says, the other coco byproducts Juboken makes are the stitch fiber mat (material used in making car seats and mattresses)', which costs P50 a kilo; coconut dust (soil conditioner), P50 a kilo; cocopot, P2 a piece, and doormat, P40 a piece.

Juboken distributes these products to department stores nationwide.

Arboleda says the soil control erosion net is highly saleable because buyers from the western countries had proven the coconet to be more effective than jute.

He says he developed the soil erosion control net in 1992 in Germany.

Erosion control

"The coconet is the best device for controlling soil erosion because it is six times more durable than jute," the agriculture engineer claimed.

Explaining how erosion is being controlled, he said the cocofiber serves as a water absorber and a canal.

"When the water runs through the net, the water is absorbed and then flows directly to the ground," Arboleda further explains.

He says one kilo of cocofiber can absorb the equivalent in volume of at least two kilos of water held in a container.

Production grid

With the viable products that can be made from coconut husks as proven by Arboleda, Alfredo Rillo, Philippine Coconut Authority regional manager, says the PCA, in coordination with National Economic Development Authority and through the Juboken Enterprise, set up a project called the Bicol production grid.

The grid aims to generate income for Bicolano farmers by asking them to gather coconut husks, which the Juboken Enterprise will purchase for 6 centavos a piece.

According to Rillo, the farmers would not find it hard keeping and disposing the coconut husks because a Juboken company truck will pick up the product.

He says Guinobatan and Camalig towns in Albay are good sources of coconut husks because of their vast coconut plantations.

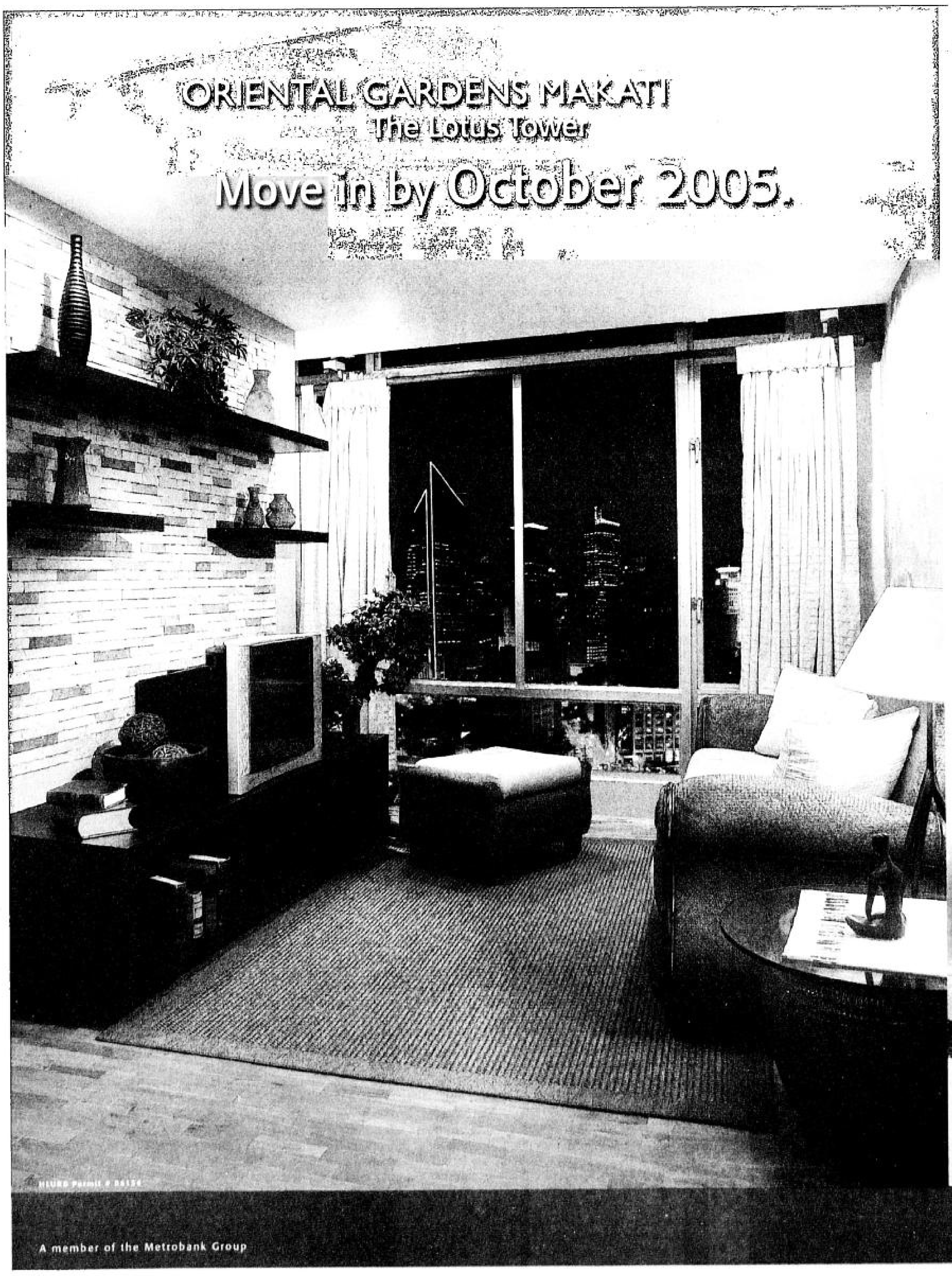
China contract

Arboleda says he recently closed a $1 million yearly contract with China for the supply of coconet for its soil erosion control projects to prevent landslides.

He discloses he has also done big projects in Japan like the embankment of slopes.

Arboleda says his product was also used in the construction of the biggest dam in Southeast Asia, the San Roque Dam in Pangasinan, as a soil erosion control net.

With the good result of using coconet in construction projects, Malacañang, through Memorandum Circular No. 25, directed the Department of Public Works and Highways to use the coconet to prevent and control soil erosion. For his accomplishment in turning a former waste material into an environment and life preserving one by pioneering in soil erosion control products, Arboleda received the Golden Shell award on Dec. 13, 2004 for excellence in export from President Macapagal-Arroyo.



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- Two new awards sections include Titanium Lions for Integrated Campaigns and Radio Lions
- Two new Agency of the Year awards—Direct Marketing Agency of the Year and Interactive Agency of the Year
- 30 high-powered seminars including the Saatchi & Saatchi New Directors' Showcase, Leo Burnett, Procter & Gamble, Wunderman, Getty Images, Dentsu, MSN, Hermann Vaske, USA Today and The Mill
- Three awards ceremonies
- Two galas
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The 52nd International Advertising Festival will be held on June 19-25,2005 in Cannes, France.

Liberal Philippines essay writing tilt

JOIN the big essay writing contest sponsored by Liberal Philippines magazine and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. Win an unforgettable trip to magnificent Batanes with a chance of a one-on-one encounter with Department of Education Secretary Florencio "Butch" Abad. A Nokia cell phone and a CD-MP3 player are waiting for the writers of the second and third best essays. The essay theme is "The Filipino as a Liberal." Entries should be sent to liberal@fnf.org.ph and editor@liberal-philippines.com not later than Jan. 31, 2005. Your text must be written in English and should not be longer than 1,000 words. The contest is open to anyone from 15-35 years old.

The winners will be announced on Feb. 15, 2005.

Late for tea but catching up fast

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

Earth & Sky
Lemon Iced Tea
Refreshed & Calm

JOCELYN Reyes admits Coke was a 'johnny come lately' in the iced tea business but they have been getting a good market share.

EVER since tea plantation owner Richard Blechynden dumped ice into a vat of hot tea during the 1904 St. Louis Trade Fair in Missouri, the world fell in love with the cool, soothing taste of iced tea.

In the Philippines, that love affair has not cooled. If any, it became even more passionate over the past decade, with Filipinos consuming more glasses of iced tea.

Industry figures showed the iced tea market grew by 16 percent over the past three years, of which half is in the form of powdered iced tea. The rest is in the form of ready to made drinks and sales food services (vending machines or dispensers).

Iced tea also accounts for as many as seven out of every 10 beverages sold in food service outlets and schools, not to mention restaurants that usually offer "bottomless" iced tea.

It is this growing market, currently dominated by Nestea and Lipton, that the Coca-Cola group wants to penetrate through its Earth and Sky iced tea.

Jocelyn Reyes, portfolio manager for water and tea of The Coca-Cola Export Co. admits Coke was a latecomer in the iced tea segment of the beverages market, as the group concentrated for many years in the softdrinks market.

But the iced tea market grew so fast, it could no longer be ignored.

Add to the fact that consumers these days are more health conscious, thus, tend to shy away from drinking too many cans of softdrinks.

Reyes, however, said that despite being late in the game, the group took its time in developing its iced tea product.

"We said to ourselves that if we are to field our own entry into the market, it should be something different. Not a me-too product," she says.

The group started developing the product at the end of 2002, and it was not until October 2003 that Earth and Sky was finally launched.

"We designed our own packaging and we thought of different names until we came up with Earth and Sky to represent something soothing and calming," Reyes says.

Earth and Sky was also chosen, she says, as it evokes images of being natural and authentic.

To further differentiate itself from the market, Earth and Sky portrayed itself as a healthy beverage that will help beat the stress weighing down on its target market—the young, aggressive, career-oriented adults.

The iced tea packs are in red, making them stand out from the sea of blue and yellow packaging of its competitors.

Coca-Cola also positioned Earth and Sky as iced tea that tastes closest to the original.

During Blechynden's time, tea was first brewed before ice was added, to make iced tea.

More than 100 years later, the bulk of iced tea sold and consumed comes in powdered form.

Just dissolve instant iced tea mix in ice-cold water, and you have iced tea in a matter of seconds.

Taste was sacrificed for the sake of convenience.

Reyes, however, says Earth and Sky wanted to bring back some of that taste into instant iced tea.

It conducted taste tests that focused on qualities such as sourness, sweetness and aftertaste, if any. To get that natural flavor, it used natural tea powder and lemon.

"We say that our tea tastes like natural tea and we even fortified it with Vitamin C. We are the first to claim that in this category," Reyes says.

The public responded as Coca-Cola hoped, with Earth and Sky now claiming 13.5 percent of the iced tea market, according to figures from the ACNielsen, a research firm.

This could also be attributed to the price, as Earth and Sky is about 12 percent cheaper than the competitors, encouraging buyers to give it a try.

It still has a long way to go, but the group hopes that Earth and Sky will eventually be for iced tea, what Coke is for softdrinks.

Employees and employer's tax reporting responsibilities

By Ruben R. Rubio and Jose Rey R. Manuel
SGV & Co.

(Second of two parts)

IT IS the duty of an employer to submit the application for registration (BIR Form No. 1902) or the exemption certificate (BIR Form No. 2305) to the Revenue District Office (RDO) where the business is located within 30 days from receipt from the employees. The employer must indicate on the forms the date it received the papers. Being the withholding agent, the employer must also accomplish or update the required form.

The employer should provide the employee concerned with a copy of the forms filed with and received by the BIR. The employer should apply the correct exemptions and status in the computation of taxes required to be withheld on the compensation income of the employee.

Where the husband has waived the additional exemption, the employer of the husband must furnish the employer of the wife a copy of the signed waiver form or sworn statement of the husband.

Withholding taxes

An employer must deduct a withholding tax from the salaries he pays to his employees. The procedures in determining the tax are explained further in Revenue Regulation 2-1998, Section 2.79. The employer makes a return (BIR Form No. 1601C—monthly remittance return) and remits the tax on or before the 10th day of the month following the month in which the withholding was made at the AAB (accredited bank) within the RDO where the registered address of the employer is located. If there is no AAB, to the revenue collecting officer or duly authorized city or municipal treasurer. The tax withheld for the month of December however, will be remitted on or before the 15th day of the month following the month in which the withholding was made. For employers who are enrolled in the electronic payment and filing system (EFPS), the filing (staggered filing) and payment deadline set under the said program should be strictly followed.

The employer may withhold the tax on the basis of the average estimated compensation, with the necessary adjustments, for any month/quarter/year.

Annualization: Deficiency or excess tax

Before the calendar year ends but prior to the payment of compensation for the last payroll period (December or when the employee was terminated) the employer will determine the amount of withholding tax on compensation income or refund due to all employees by computing the tax due on the taxable income for the entire taxable calendar year or period of employment for that year, including the last compensation to be paid, 13th month pay and other incentives and compensation from previous employment less the sum of taxes withheld from January to November of the same taxable calendar year or period of employment for that year, including those withheld from previous employment. Any deficiency tax will be deducted from the last compensation. Any excess tax will be refunded not later than Jan. 15 of the following year.

However, if employment was terminated before December, the refund will be given at the payment of the last compensation.

13th month pay

With a few exceptions, employers are required to pay a 13th month pay not later than Dec. 24 of every year to all their rank-and-file employees, regardless of the amount of basic salary they receive in a month, and regardless of their designation or employment status and irrespective of the method by which their wages are paid, provided that they have worked for at least one month during the calendar year.

The 13th month pay is equivalent to 1/12 of the total regular basic salary earned during the year or at a certain period.

An income exclusion not exceeding P30,000 is granted to benefits received by employees such as productivity incentives, Christmas bonus, mid-year bonus, cash bonuses, including the 13th month pay.

Employers required to withhold the tax should file the annual information return (BIR Form No. 1604CF), together with the alphabetical list of employees who are recipient of income payments, to the RDO or large taxpayers assistance division/large-taxpayers district office on or before Jan. 31 of the succeeding year.

If the employer has 10 or more employees, it is required to submit the said list in a 3.5 inch diskette using a BIR-prescribed format. If the number of income payees is nine and below, the employer has the option to submit a diskette. In any case, the manually prepared list should be attached to the information return when filing. Separate schedules may be prepared for foreign nationals.

Only readable diskette upon submission will be considered as duly filed alphalist by the employer. Employers are required to store the same for three years as backup.

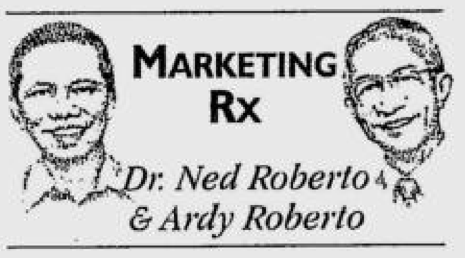
The filing of the BIR Form No. 1604 CF, together with the alphalist, will be considered a substituted filing of the employees' income tax return to the extent that the amount of compensation and taxes withheld appearing on the said form is consistent with the corresponding amount indicated in BIR Form No. 2316.

Withholding certificate

The employer is required to furnish its employees from whose compensation income taxes have been withheld the certificate of income payment/tax withheld (BIR Form No. 2316), on or before Jan. 31st of the succeeding calendar year, or if employment was terminated before the close of such calendar year, on the day of which the last payment of compensation was made.

When certified by both the employee and employer, it is tantamount to the filing of Form 1700. The employer is required to retain a copy of the duly signed Form 2316 for three years.

Books to read, seminar to attend – II



HERE'S the continuation of last week's wish list of marketing business books to read and conferences to attend. All of these books should be available at Powerbooks or National Bookstore.

July—Read: Call of the Mall-The Geography of Shopping by Paco Underhill (Simon & Schuster) P679. The best-selling author of Why We Buy-The Science of Shopping is back with a new book that should prove to be an eye-opener and enjoyable read. If your business or career is related in any way with selling stuff in a mall for that matter, this is a must read.

Underhill is an anthropologist turned marketing consultant who has an incessant curiosity for understanding consumer buying behavior in stores (i.e. 'what makes people buy stuff in stores?'). He's turned this curiosity and mountain of research into a very profitable consulting business. His books have good, practical insights for anyone thinking of putting up a retail store (with advice on what do with your store signs to what shelves to use). If you haven't read, "Why We Buy-The Science of Shopping," include that in your list as well and give it to your shopaholic friends who can't resist the "call of the mall." They'll have a better understanding of what retailers are trying to do to get them to spend more.

Attend: The National Philippine Retailers Conference organized by the Philippine Retailers Association. Their exhibits alone give you an idea of the thriving retail industry in the Philippines. (According to Professor Potch Macaranas of AIM, the retail industry is benefiting (and will continue to benefit) from the increase in personal consumption habits of Filipinos).

August

August—Read: Chinese Traders in a Philippine Town (From Daily Competition to Urban Transformation) by Norbert Daunhaeuser (Ateneo de Manila University Press) P325. This literally hard-to-find book was fished out of the bottom shelve of a National Bookstore. The author, Daunhaeuser, chronicles the life of several Fil-Chinese who run small to medium-sized enterprises in Dagupan, Pangasinan. If you do business with the Chinese this will help you gain an understanding of how they do business—from understanding their secretiveness, pricing, and marketing mindsets.

You could also read "Inside Chinese Business: A Guide for Managers Worldwide by Ming Jer Chen" (Harvard Business School Press) P1,405. If you're about to do business in China, this book's tips and insights would certainly save you heartache and loss. It also has a useful list of recommended websites in case you need to do more research before launching your enterprise in China.

Attend: The 4th DM/CRM Forum or the PMA's Agora Conference.

September

September—Read: Marketing Insights from A-Z by Philip Kotler (John Wiley & Sons) P1,725. The senior MRx's co-author, mentor and professor at the Kellogg School catalogues 80 of "the most important" marketing ideas that every marketer has at his disposal. If there is anyone who has the "right" to write such a book, Kotler (whose marketing textbooks remain required reading for every management and business student) has earned the "K" (karapatan) to do so. Since September is the time of the year that most marketers sit down and pow-wow to work on their marketing plans, it would be good to review your copy of Josiah Go's "The Marketing Plan" (Josiah Go Foundation) about P295. The local case studies that Go uses makes it a more down-to-earth read for Filipino marketers.

Attend: The International Financial Planning Forum by the IARFC comes to Manila for the first time. A relevant event for businessmen and entrepreneurs who want to know how to manage, grow and conserve their wealth. (What's the use of making money from your marketing efforts if you don't know how to manage it?).

October

October—Read: Teacher to Tycoon. The Life and Times of Trinidad Diaz Enriquez by Erlinda Enriquez Panlilio. (Anvil) P395. Winner Manila Critics Circle National Book Award. Trace the thoughts and life of a Filipino entrepreneur whose enterprises thrived in the '70s and '80s. Remember D&E Restaurant, Sulo Restaurant, Silahis Hotel and the first Playboy Club in Asia, Philippine Village Hotel, and Puerto Azul. (Makes you think, 'what happened to them?') This account about "Trining" Enriquez's adventures in the hotel and restaurant business can't get any closer since the author is the daughter of the subject. Originally written as a thesis at UP, author Panlilio gets raves from national artist, N.V.M Gonzalez, who says the book reads like a novel. The value of this book comes from the insight and inspiration that businessmen will get about doing business in the Philippines. Here are two only-in-the-Philippines type of books that you should read: "Hard Target - Protecting Yourself from Terrorists and Kidnappers" by Dominador Clemente Resos Jr. Don't laugh yet! With kidnapping happening even inside Ayala Alabang Village, why not? English Plain and Simple: No-Nonsense Ways To Learn Today's Global Language by Jose Carillo (Manila Times press) P384. If you're tired of your sales and marketing staff not being able to communicate in good English, get them a copy of this book.

November

November—Read: Gut Feel by Minyong Ordoñez (Anvil) P350. The author is the recipient of 1st Creative Guild Lifetime Achievement Award and yes, we need to disclose, a good friend of the senior MRx. This well-respected *"poste"* /pillar of Philippine advertising gives something back to the advertising and business community by sharing his reflections on life. Ordoñez writes about the emotional roller-coaster rides that came with running Basic Advertising during a time when a client's 'global realignment' meant being fired and losing P300 million to P500 million in billings ("advertising is not for the faint-hearted" he says) only to be invited to pitch and win another P500M big account a few months later. The chapter on Managing by Inspiring is more than worth the cover price of this book. Attend: The Ad Congress. And please attend not just the parties but also the learning sessions!

December

December—Read: The Perfect Store-inside ebay by Adam Cohen (Little, Brown) P1,225. Ebay is one of those businesses that everyone wished they had set-up (including ourselves.) The story of how ebay founder, Pierre Omidyar, started, grew and managed this Internet auction site will surely be amazing reading for everyone who's ever wanted to start an e-commerce venture (including Omidyar's friends who said he was crazy to think that ebay would make money.) A few years after setting up ebay, Omidyar was worth $4B and counting. The author was actually given a company ID, a workspace by ebay, and free access to ebay's workers and executives, including legendary CEO, Meg Whitman, so expect an insider's perspective on how this "perfect store" was launched and how it's growth was managed. Watch out and please add to your library, There are too many Christmas parties to attend to already so take a break from the seminars.

Feedback at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412.

EPSON
DURABrite
INK

Meant to Last

We have all heard the phrase, "Some things are meant to last." Although a cliché, it is especially true when we want to remember the good times we've had with our families and friends.

One way to capture those special moments is with photographs. But like everything else, they don't last forever. Pictures fade when exposed to sunlight and smudge when they come into contact with water. Although we can't make images that last forever, we can at least make them last as long as possible.

That's exactly what Epson's done with their new DURAbrite inks. They have a special formulation of pigment inks that protect your prints from fading and smudging. So, they last longer than ever before.

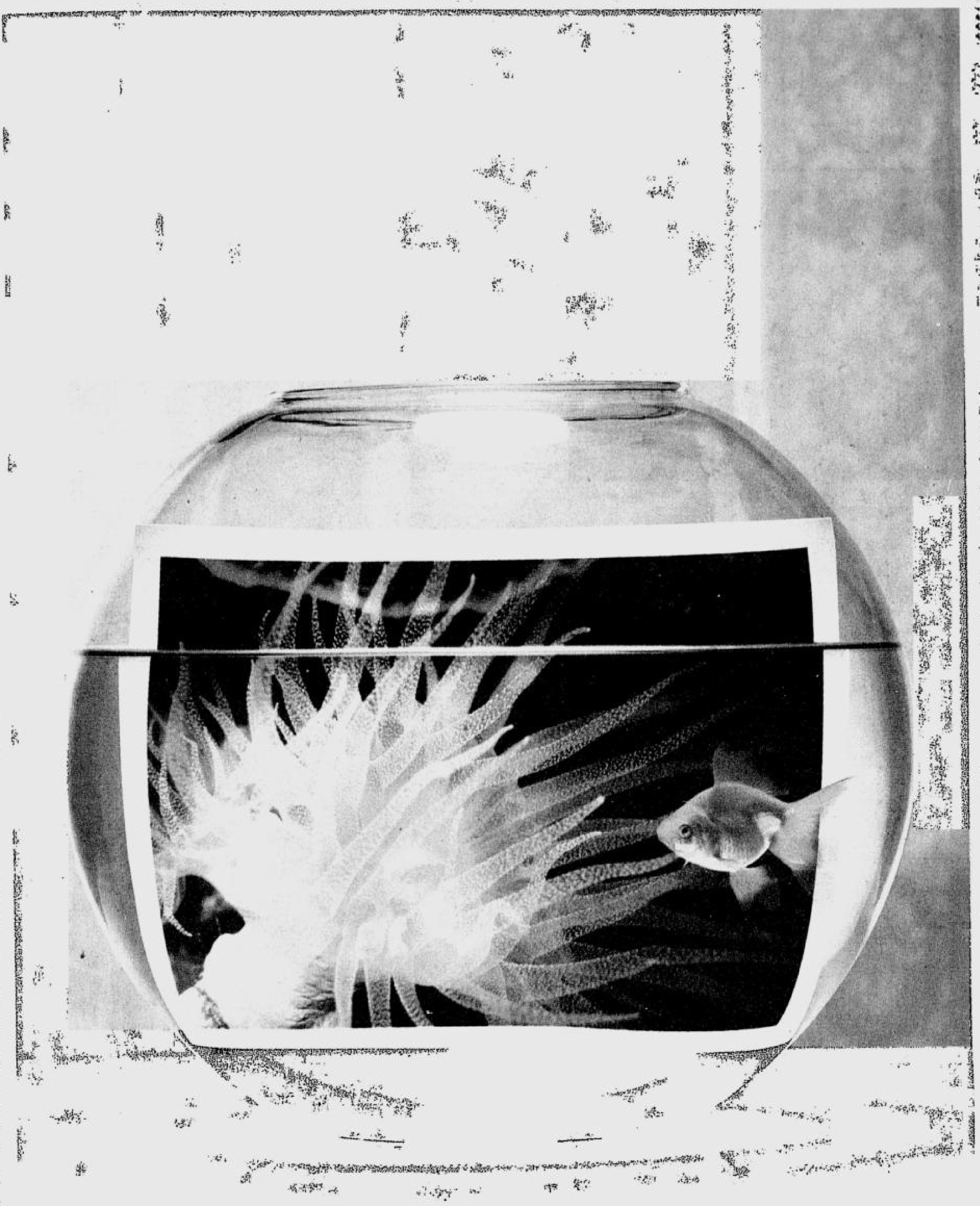
In fact, DURABrite inks are so tough, you can even submerge your prints under water for extended periods without anything happening to the ink. That's because conventional dye-based inks have particles that are easily absorbed in the fibers of plain paper, making them very soluble to water. But **DURABrite's pigment-based inks consist of insoluble pigment particles,** much like oil paint, that 'rest' on the paper's surface. This gives DURABrite inks water resistance on all kinds of paper. Now you can 'accidentally' spill a glass of water on those special prints without having to worry.

Apart from protecting your prints against water, there are other benefits to DURABrite inks, as well. **The same advanced formulation that prevents ink particles from dispersing in water, also coats and protects the ink from the effects of the harsh outdoor sun.** No other ink can offer this kind of light resistance on plain paper. That means you never have to worry about leaving your prints exposed.

Another advantage of DURABrite inks is that they give you a clearer picture by offering you extra sharp text and graphics. That's because conventional dye-based ink acts like watercolor paint that 'bleeds' into paper fibers, producing a 'feathered' effect. **DURABrite's dye-based inks are not easily absorbed into paper, making text printing especially sharp.**

An added bonus of DURAbrite inks is that you get to save on paper, as well. **DURAbrite dye-based inks don't bleed all the way through, so you get another pristine white sheet to print over.** Although some inks can also do this on glossy or matte paper, **DURAbrite inks can best achieve 'double-sided' printing on plain paper.**

DURAbrite inks are the ideal choice for anyone who values the memories that great quality prints can provide. No other inks can combine superior photo-image quality with the same water and light resistance characteristics. Now your memories can stay fresh and bright longer that ever before.



Lasts long in a fishbowl. A lifetime in your photo album.

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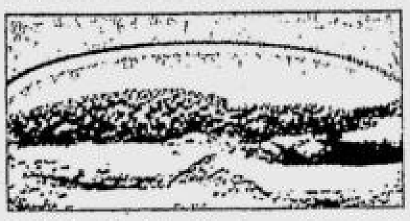
No limits.

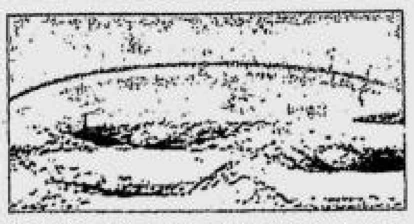
Advantage of DURABrite Inks

Water and Smudge-Resistant Prints: Conventional dye-based inks are composed of color-forming molecules that are absorbed into the paper or captured in the coating of coated papers much like a watercolor paint. **DURABrite inks consist of insoluble pigment particles, like an oil paint, that rest on the paper's surface.** Although conventional dye-based inks are water-resistant on specific glossy photo papers, they do not have water resistance on matte papers. **DURABrite is water-resistant on glossy, matte, and even plain papers.**

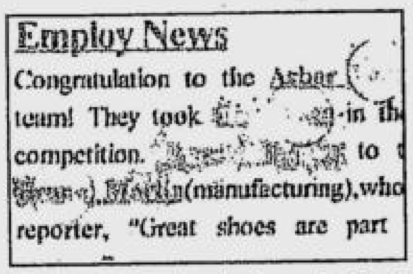
The water and smudge-rersistant properties of DURABrite Inks prevent accidental damage caused by moisture and spills. Many competitive printers use a water-resistant black pigment, **but DURABrite inks are the only ink system that is pigment-based for black and color printing.**



DURABrite Inks pigment particles "rest" on the surface of plain paper and are insoluble in water.



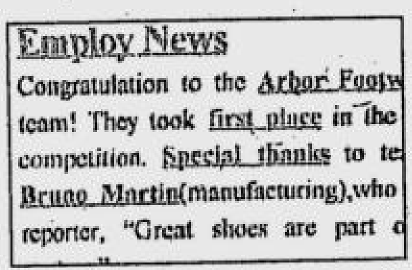
Conventional dye-based ink particles are absorbed into the fibers of plain paper and are soluble in water.



Employ News

Congratulation to the Arbor
team! They took [illegible] in th
competition. [illegible] to
[illegible] Martin(manufacturing),who
reporter, "Great shoes are part

With competiors inks, only black is water-resistant.

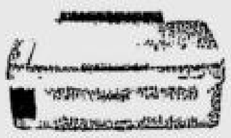


Employ News

Congratulation to the Arbor Footw
team! They took first place in the
competition. Special thanks to te
Bruno Martin(manufacturing),who
reporter, "Great shoes are part o

DURABrite Inks have water resistant properties for black and color.

Durabrite water resistant ink technology: The clear advantage in inks



EPSON STYLUS. CX4500
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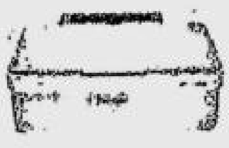

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BUSINESS Friday

WHEN dirt gets into an oyster, it has the option to die or use what it has and create a gem out of it.

PHOTO BY MANDY NAVASERO

The Pearl principle: Create value from muck around

By Nelia Cruz Sarcol
Contributor

Part 1: The pain of becoming

FILIPINOS are known for being *"matiisin"* which is mistaken for resiliency by a majority of our people. Resilience is supposed to be a manifestation of strength of character—to bounce back and move on and move forward.

The misconception that resilience is the same as *"pagtitiis" or "matiisin"* is not good. Too much of *"pagtitiis"* can be the cause of a person's downfall. Resilience is the act of overcoming crisis by doing something about it.

We have to learn to distinguish the two otherwise we won't be able to move on and move forward. We will remain just "standing in place" or worst, we could be stepping backwards thus repeating the same mistakes.

We have to bring our *"pagtitiis"* to a higher level—and that is *"pagkilos"* —To do something to get out of and improve the situation.

However, the journey from the state of *"pagtitiis"* to *"pag-kilos"* will require the need for change. This must be guided by the core values of enlightened discernment rooted in the acceptance that change must begin with the self.

Introspection is the key to unlocking the right core values. Understanding of the self is truly basic before anything else can happen.

We must always look at the big picture—but we must act on what is within our reach and within our ability to solve—effecting positive and peaceful change within our sphere!

An oyster is a very good example of positive change from within. The oyster invaded and irritated by deadly micro-organisms could just opt not to do anything but die. The oyster chose to create something out of its predicament—the pearl. You see, nature is the best teacher! God intended for nature to be our model. People often react by destroying, as influenced by our biases and fears—because that is not our nature.

The Pearl Principle (a poem)

In the deep blue sea a mystery grew…
from an oyster which didn't know what to do.
A Teredo got through the crevice of its shell,
oh, the pain was like hell!
While it seemed so tranquil down there,
this oyster was screaming but help was nowhere.
Did the poor oyster blame the sea
for its predicament, the deplorable state
that could have been its fate?
Oh, no.
Oysters are so plain,
but this one refused to die in vain.
"What do I have to fight off a Teredo?"
the poor oyster thought,
"I don't have anything but
I know how to secrete nacre though!"
The oyster with all its might,
secreted as much nacre as it could
and coated the foe…until the foe
became a beautiful shiny bead
which we now know as the pearl.

The oyster acted to convert an irritation into an opportunity to create. It is natural for any creature especially for people to reinvent oneself and improve oneself. If we can only look beyond in order to see beauty and opportunity rather than indulge in self pity or remain a victim of our circumstances.

It is within our means to convert a state of hopelessness into a state of optimism, where opportunities are created as in the creation of a pearl.

Change and progress begin from within and within one's sphere.

The Pearl Principle, when consistently lived and practiced by every Filipino, will lead to prosperity, peace and harmony. We believe the Pearl Principle is the key.

(To be continued. Part II- Essence of the Pearl Principle)

THE AUTHOR is spearheading projects in Cebu that adopt the Pearl Principle.

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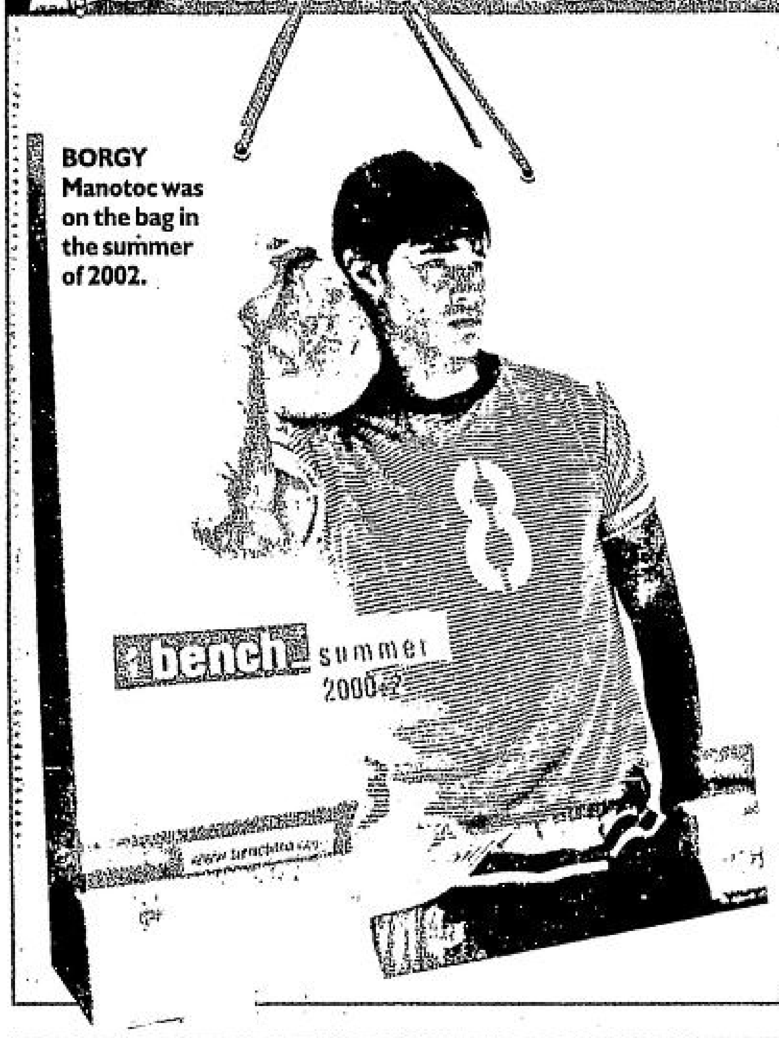
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

P99 a dozen
DUNKIN' DONUTS
RAINBOW Choco Rings

Editor's rave Board

Portable art

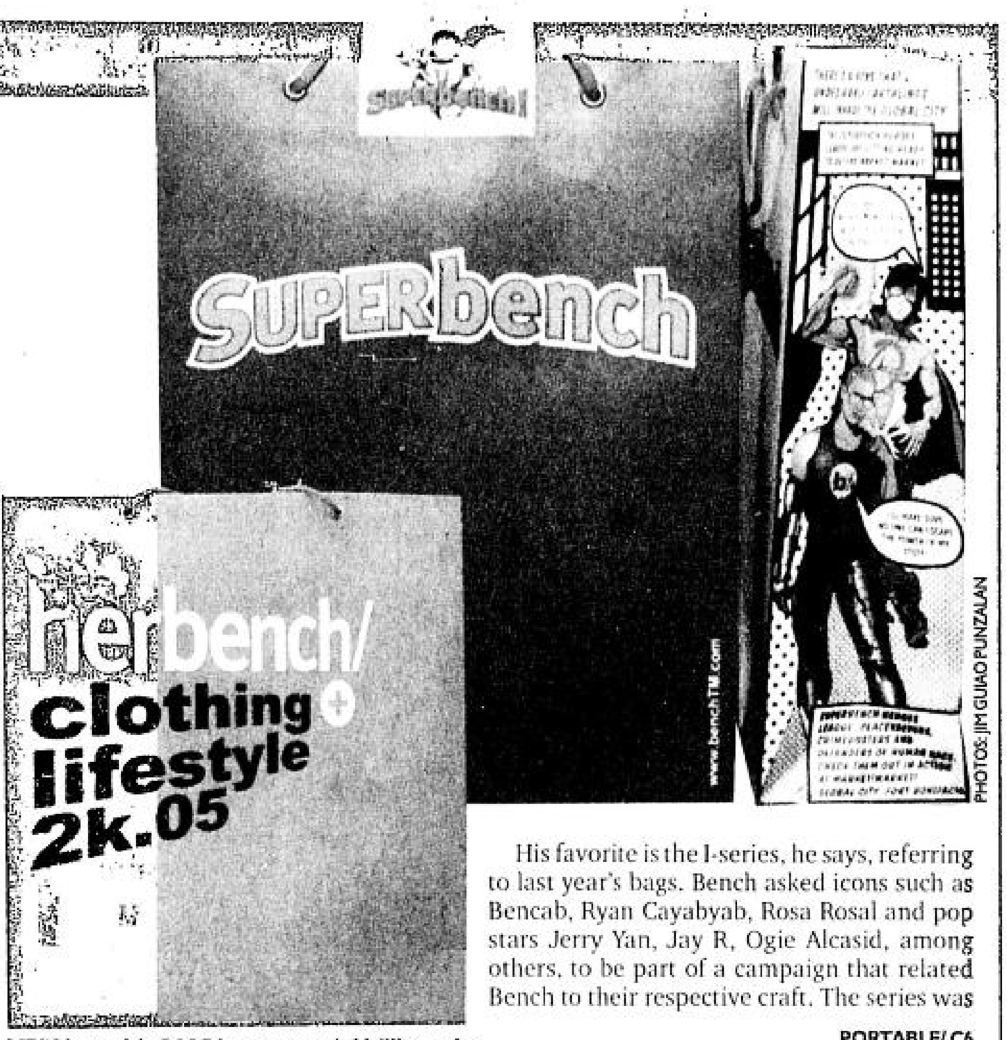


BORGY Manotoc was on the bag in the summer of 2002.

OF ALL THINGS, my daughter collects shopping bags. Not the plain plastic polluters—the househelp keeps those to reuse as wastecan liners—but the really pretty paper bags designed to work like mini-billboards.

A smart retailer doesn't mind spending extra on a bag that doubles as a canvas expressing a mood or a theme. The best example of this hereabouts is the fashion brand Bench.

"We use our bags to showcase the different campaigns we have every quarter," says Ben Chan. His team of graphic artists is kept busy all year round because he likes to change the design of the Bench and Herbench shopping bags every season.

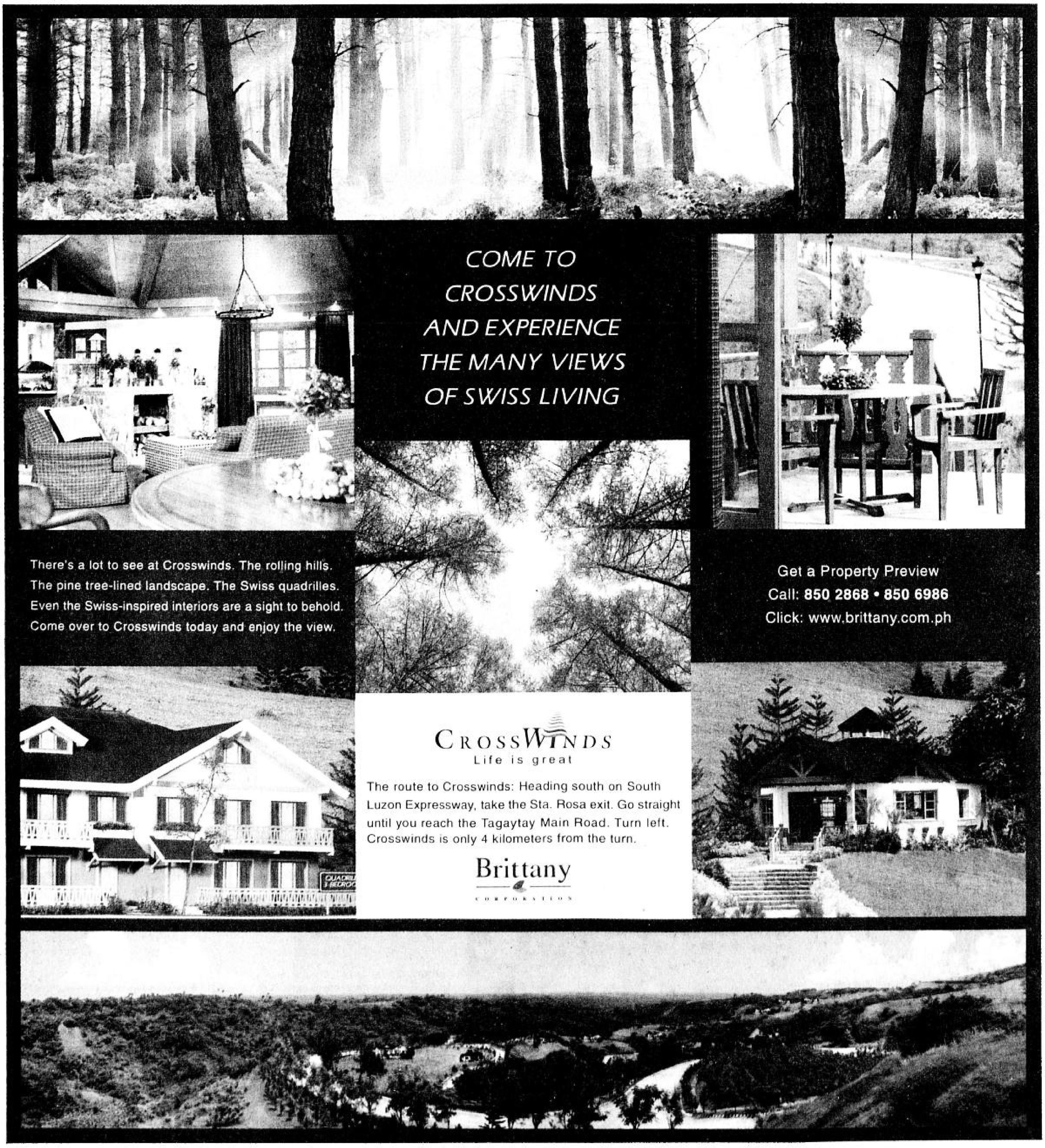


PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

VERY graphic 2005 bags are mini billboards.

His favorite is the I-series, he says, referring to last year's bags. Bench asked icons such as Bencab, Ryan Cayabyab, Rosa Rosal and pop stars Jerry Yan, Jay R, Ogie Alcasid, among others, to be part of a campaign that related Bench to their respective craft. The series was

PORTABLE/ C6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Fur factor

WRAP up the coolest looks with shrugs, shawls, ponchos and cardigans.

In tiger, leopard, cheetah, panther and fox-inspired faux furs, they are taking a big fashion leap forward at SM. Zebra stripes also gallop in style, while cuddly bear and raccoon furs will keep you warm and wonderful.

Animal lovers need not worry, as these are faux furs. Today's furs pop out of the jungle in colors like baby pink, fuchsia and green. And they're definitely cool when worn with jeans or fluid dresses.

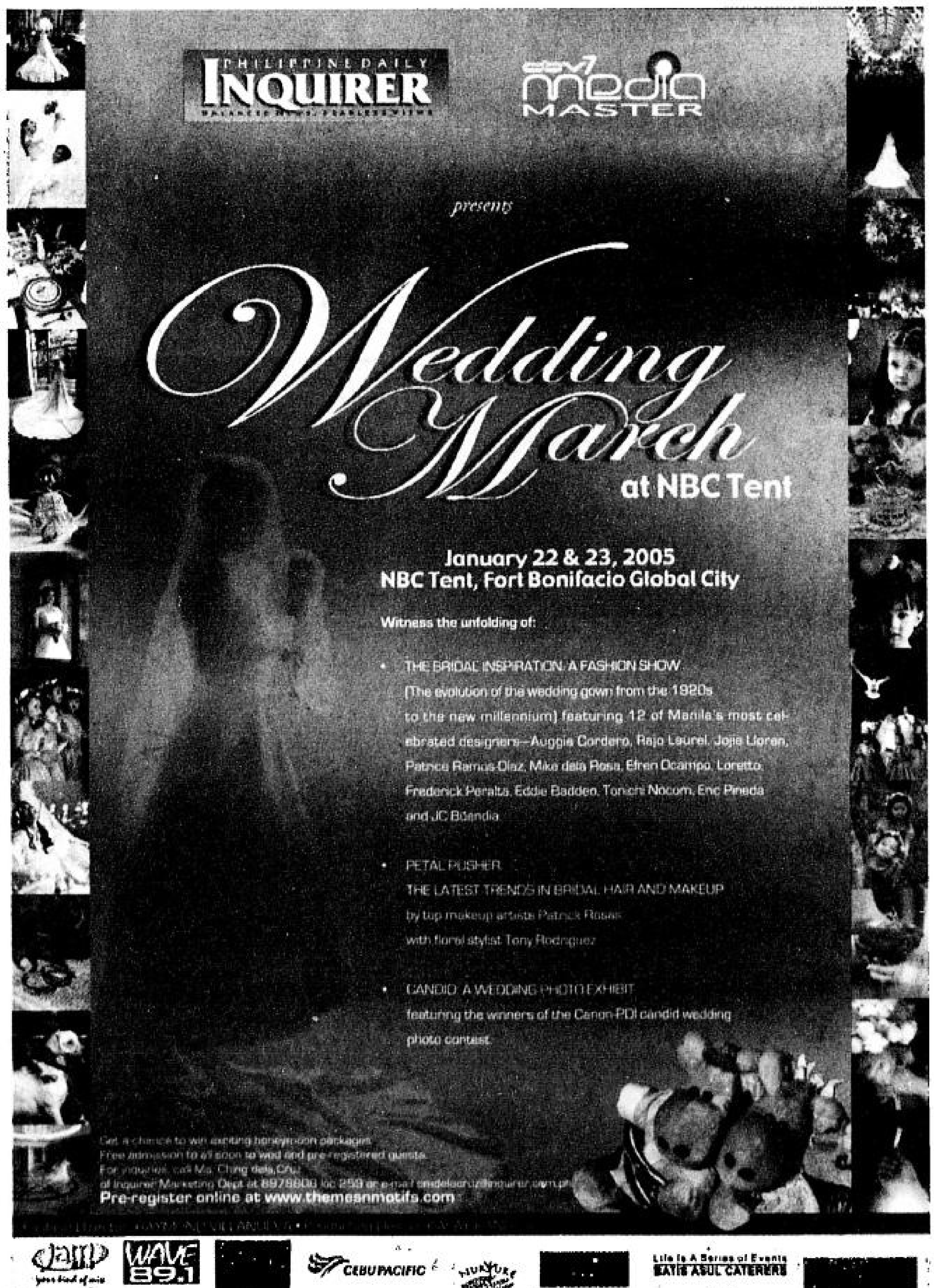
The fur collection is available at the Boutique Square Department of all SM stores.

PINK panther-inspired fur shrug with bow accent worn over a pink tank top and denims

LEOPARD fur shrug with lace bow accent worn over a chocolate-brown dress

TIGER-INSPIRED shrug worn over a beige lace top and denim jeans

ZEBRA-INSPIRED fur cardigan worn over a white tank top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Witness the unfolding of:
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- PETAL PUSHER THE LATEST TRENDS IN BRIDAL HAIR AND MAKEUP by top makeup artists Patrick Rosas with floral stylist Tony Rodriguez
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Karangalan festival at CCP

THE KARANGALAN Conference and Festival will be held today until Jan. 23 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Main Theater. The theme is "Mobilizing Excellence to Create a Visionary Philippines." Speakers include Florencio Abad, Gerry Ablaza, Emily Abrera, Walden Bello, Sheila Coronel, Tony Tan Caktiong, Chin Chin Gutierrez, Von Hernandez, Nes Jardin, Sr. Mary John Mananzan, Nicanor Perlas, Jesse Robredo, Miriam Katigbak and the PNOC Solar Project Team. Call 6871309/ 6871312.

GOINGS ON

VOCATION SEMINAR. The Jesuits are conducting a vocation seminar for college students and young professionals on Jan. 23 at the Conference Room-Penthouse of Makati Citadel Inn, 5007 P. Burgos St., Makati City, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration is free. Call 4266101 or e-mail vocprom@vasia.com or acoloma@admu.edu.ph.

WORKSHOP. Sam Molina, professor emeritus of George Washington University in Washington, D.C. conducts a workshop on digital photography until tomorrow at Comfoods Building annex, Sen. Gil Puyat corner Chino Roces Avenues, Makati. Call 8435341/ 8137420.

FORUM. Asia Society Phils. Foundation Inc. is organizing a luncheon forum featuring Thomas Hubbard, former US Ambassador to the Philippines, Korea and Palau. The senior advisor to Akin, Gump Strauss, Hauer & Feld LLP will speak about Challenges on the Korean Peninsula. The event will be held Jan. 24 at The Continental, Tower Club, 33/F Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati. Call 7524374/ 8108983.

BENEFIT SHOW. The 1980 high school batches of Assumption and La Salle Greenhills will host Assumption Con Verde, a dinner-dance and fashion show, on Jan. 27, 7 p.m., at NBC Tent. The event is for the benefit of La Salle Batch '80s scholars for Adult Night High School and Assumption Mission Schools.

ENVIRONMENTAL EVENT. The Communication Foundation for Asia opens to all students and single professionals the Coffeehouse Environmental Series. The first gathering, "Usok: Our Daily Breath," focuses on air pollution and will be held Jan. 28, 6-9 p.m., at CFA Poolside, 4427 Interior Old Sta. Mesa, Manila. Admission is free. Call 7147233/ 7132732.

SALE. Rustan's Cubao is holding a "Moving Out Sale" until Jan. 31 as it closes doors and heads to its newest location, the newly opened Gateway Mall at Araneta Center. Selected prime pieces from Men's and Ladies' fashion, Young Adults, Children, and Home departments will be available at discounts of up to 70 percent.

SEMINAR. Top local and foreign photographers will be lecturers in the seminars during Photoworld Manila. The event will be held Feb. 4-7 at Asian Institute of Management. Call 8435341/ 8137420.

FORUM. The Communication Foundation for Asia will hold a forum on "Making Choices That You Won't Regret" on Feb. 5, 9 a.m.-12 nn, at CFA seminar room, 4427 Interior Old Sta. Mesa, Manila. Call 7132732/ 7147233/ 7132981.

FAIR. The 12th Fiesta Edition Fair Manila is ongoing until Feb. 6 at Greenhills Shopping Complex.

HOMECOMING. On the occasion of the 80th founding year of St. Scholastica's Academy of San Fernando, Pampanga, there will be a general homecoming on Feb. 12, 10 a.m., at the school's covered court. Call Lucy Albances at 0921-4305340 and Corazon Fausto-Baluyot, 0918-3580288.

CONGRESS. The Episcopal Commission on the Bible Apostolate will hold the first Asia-Oceania Bible Congress on Feb. 14-18 at Mariapolis Center, Tagaytay City. Call 5274157.

PROMO. Shoppers can still join Key to a Million raffle promo with every P300 single receipt purchase from Robinsons Supermarket, Big R Supercenter or Robinsons Supercenter which is equivalent to one raffle coupon. Bonus raffle coupons are given for purchase of selected sponsor's products or whenever the Robinsons Store Card is used. Promo is ongoing until Feb. 15.

CONFERENCE. The Center for Learning and Teaching Styles Phils. hosts the First Cordillera Administrative Region Parents Congress on Feb. 19, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at Baguio City National High School Auditorium, Gov. Pack Road, Baguio City. Call (074) 4428877 to 78.

TRADE FAIR. Bayan Telecommunications (BayanTel) made waves at the recent Games and Gadgets event at SM Megamall Hall where it provided Internet connection for exhibitors, as a major sponsor of the activity. The trade fair catered to multi-player online games, which has been a favorite pastime of young people. The event featured Tantra, a three-dimensional online game launched by ABS-CBN Interactive and BayanTel.

Bee-stung kissers

A GOOD friend of my sister came home from New York over the holidays armed with a lip-gloss like no other. Although it functioned much like a regular gloss, the difference lies in the sensation it produces. When applied, lips feel tingly, as if just kissed or bee-stung.

I was wondering how to get my hands on this cult product when lo and behold, I found a supplier in Manila (or should I say she found me). Want to try it out? Contact Christine Arambulo, 0917-5309268 or 0922-3879965 for your own DuWop Venom Gloss. Try their other products too, like DuWop Blush Therapy, a great substitute for Benetint and Tarte.

CULT products and definite must-haves: DuWop Venom Gloss and DuWop Blush Therapy

Hair repair spa

KÉRASTASE products are undeniably some of the best haircare products in the market today. I've been a big fan for years now and I was happy to learn that the prestigious brand finally opened Kérastase Institute, a salon that specializes in haircare treatments but also offers regular services that other salons offer.

The minimalist and pristine ambiance of the modern salon is calming and relaxing. And the expertise of the staff in haircare and treatment is undeniable due to Kérastase's good name. For bookings, call 8191040 or 8190886.

PRISTINE and modern interiors for a long-awaited haircare institute. Visit the Kérastase Institute at 6750 Ayala Avenue for hair treatments and other salon services.

New year, new you (and, me too!)

OUT with the old, in with the new, so the old adage goes. Although this applies to a number of things, most especially old hurts and a defeatist attitude, it may also be used for less profound but nevertheless uplifting matters such as fashion and beauty.

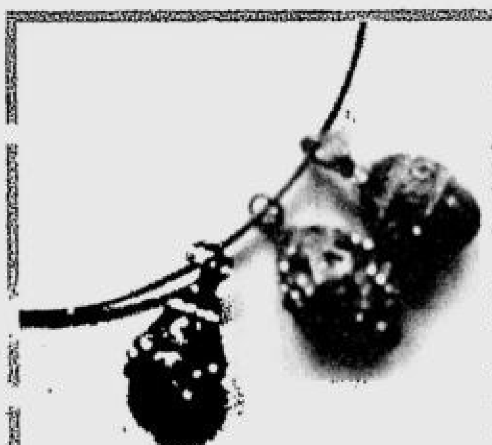
APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

The New Year inspires me to try new things, be it a brighter outlook and proactive stance to a studded funky shirt, a cult brand of makeup or yet another newly opened salon (although I must admit that I am quite the loyalist to Teng Roma's Emphasis salon).

What have you done so far to add a little spin to your life? Are you still looking for ways to update or rework your look? Start right here with some of my suggestions, which can hopefully jumpstart and inspire even bigger and better changes:

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com



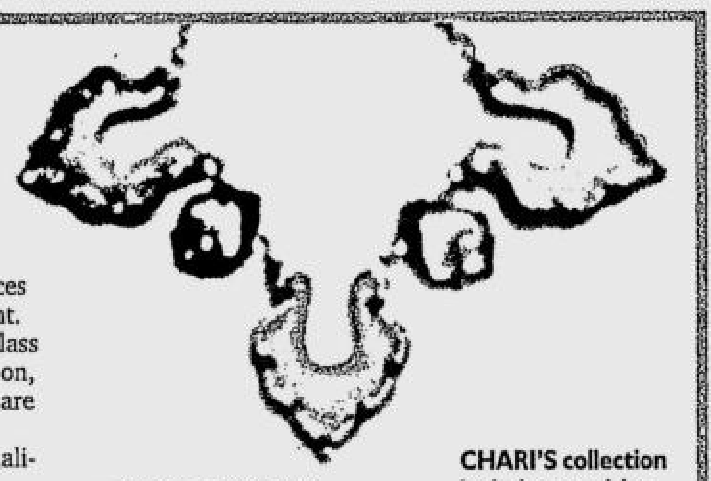
Chari's jewels

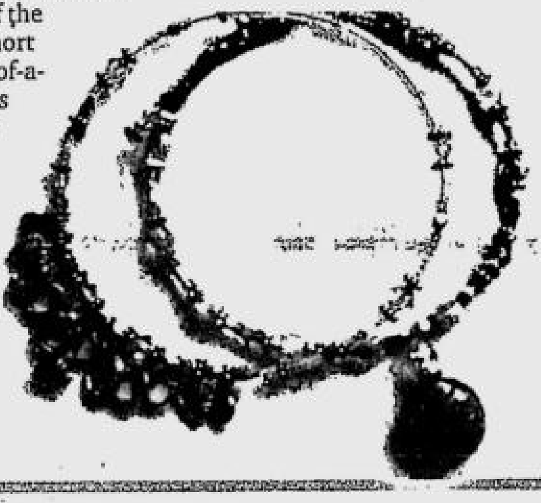
ACCESSORIES can make or break an outfit. Trite but true and every well-dressed woman knows this. What's more, accessories can add a stamp of personality into any generic outfit.

That's why I was ecstatic to discover Chari and her gems. It's quite an experience to see and touch her pieces rather than to just read about them or see them on print.

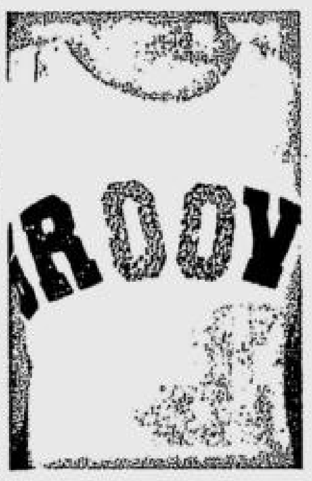
Her chokers and necklaces of Murano and vintage glass are beyond beautiful and quite interesting when piled on, as is the fashion nowadays. Her Fabergé egg pendants are also unique and eye-catching.

More important, you'll know you're getting good quality pieces because Chari Cabral is a graduate of the Gemological Institute of America and had a short stint with H. Stern Jewellers. She carries one-of-a-kind pieces under her brand Briolette, which is available in Firma at Greenbelt 3. Or you may call 0920-9242338 for inquiries.





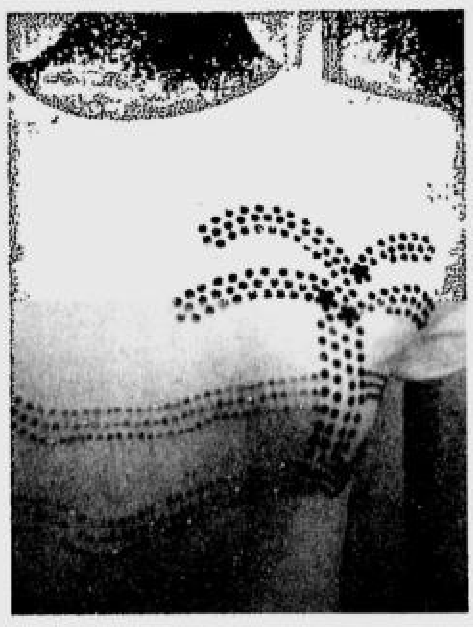
CHARI'S collection includes exquisite Fabergé egg pendants, wire chokers with authentic Venetian Murano and vintage glass, a Y necklace with vintage glass, jade and quartz and a necklace handcrafted in France and inspired by the Florentine Renaissance.



Groovy embellishments

ADD a bit of personality to a basic, sometimes boring wardrobe by purchasing a couple of embellished tanks or tees. Feeling artistic? Create your own design and adorn a plain tee with sequins, beads, buttons or crystals. You even do the same with ordinary blue jeans. You may also order from Groovy Anne, 0917-5312131 or have unique Swarovski bead designs executed by Genn Ang, 0920-9251456.

RED, pink and yellow tanks from Groovy Anne. Swarovski-encrusted black and white tees and jeans by Genn Ang



STRAIGHT *Hair.*
EXPERT *Care.*

BEFORE
AFTER

JF Lazartigue is bringing back the sought-after duo of Beatrice Benezra, JFL global sales manager and Lodie Levallet, JFL Paris' premier hair straightening specialist to Manila this February. Experience the difference of the JFL Hair Straightening treatment and get your hair treated by Ms. Levallet herself. Ms. Benezra will be on hand for consultations on hair and scalp care.

Beatrice Benezra

Experience straight beautiful hair only from JF Lazartigue. Call now for appointments.

Mark your calendar on these dates:
Feb. 3, 4 & 5 at the Wellness Zone 5/F Shangri-La
Feb. 6 & 7 at the Rockwell Center

Lodie Levallet

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HAIR IN THE WORLD
j.f. lazartigue
PARIS

Wellness Zone 5/F Shangri-La Plaza LEVEL R1, the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati
PLEASE CALL 633-7083, 898-0921 FOR INQUIRIES AND APPOINTMENTS.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FOUNDATION FOR LAY EDUCAT

(a World Heart Federation Asso

in partnership with the DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF I
AND the PHILIPPINE AMUSEME

in promoting the Healthy Lifestyle Advocacy Progr

5TH NATIONAL ANNUAL CONVENTIC

January 27-29, 2005, CARLOS P. ROMUL

Theme: "The Practicing P

By: Adolfo B. Bellosillo, MD, FACC, FSGC, FPCC, FPCP, FPCCP
Founding President, FLEHD

FOUNDATION FOR LAY EDUCATION ON HEART DISEASES

A Profile

INTRODUCTION

At no time in the history of medicine and coronary artery disease has prevention been recognized and highlighted as in the early seventies when the World Health Organization issued the following statement: "Coronary arrtery disease has reached enormous proportion, striking more and more at younger subjects. It will result in the greatest epidemic mankind has faced unless we are able to reverse it by concentrated research into its cause and prevention."

That epidemic, indeed, has come!

Globally, 50 million die each year, 40% of which are coronary and 50% when one includes hypertension and stroke.

In the Philippines, since the early nineties, heart disease has become the number cause of death among Filipinos.

Despite the medical and surgical advances, 60% of deaths occur suddenly. Among the survivors, 30% die while in the hospital and the recurrence rate of heart attack remains high.

Why prevention?

The cost of medical care is staggering and astronomical making good medical care beyond the reach of the general population. In the U.S. and Canada, the decline in death rate is attributed to change in life style which involves control of hypertension, maintaining cholesterol and sugar at normal level, smoking avoidance and cessation, physical activities, and stress management.

Life style change calls for active involvement of the person in preventive program. And active participation gets maximized only if he is educated on matters pertaining to the heart.

Who is to educate him?

Us, physicians, of course.

But do we?

Picture an office of a busy physician or cardiologist. In the midst of silence, while a patient anxiously waits with bated breath for that sum total of the doctor's professional fee and other charges, suddenly you hear the receptionist yell "next".

While the word "next" may just what most would welcome to hear, it does not allow the patient to get to know the diagnosis of his case, the nature of his ailment, the factors that contribute to the development of the disease, the situations that trigger an attack, the treatment options and possible side effects, etc. The word does not give the physician some moments to explain in simple language the above and for the patient to ask questions.

These apparent lapses in communication between patient and physician are not all that strange nor unheard of, only for a different reason or situation.

In the not so distant past, a patient surviving a heart attack, was kept in the dark as to what he was suffering from. It was feared then that the information could trigger another cardiac event, complications, if not sudden death.

But the age of cardiovascular mysticism has long been gone.

Today, the patient is told of everything there is to know in regard to his disease because success in the management of a cardiovascular case involves understanding and participation of the patient in his overall medical care. This, in turn, requires dialogue and communication between patient and his physician.

Regretfully, in this age of patient population explosion, in the present era of fast moving and high technology developments, often times the patients are told just to take the prescribed medications and to come back after a time for follow up.

The education of the public on matters pertaining to the heart has long been advocated by the World Heart Federation which must be extended to all regardless of nationality, creed, color or economic situation in life.

While institutions, agencies, organizations (both governmental and private) as well as civic organizations may very well have education of the public as one of their sworn functions, they are often defaulting for logistical reason, time constraint, inadequate number of personnel trained in the art of communications, priorities, etc.

Interestingly, while Filipinos can proudly claim that we are just about at par with our counterparts in the western countries in terms of knowledge and advances in the medical and surgical management of cardiovascular diseases, the same cannot be said of the practice of preventive cardiology.

Many an hour is spent, and for so often, on conferences, conventions, seminars, symposia and scientific meetings on what is new in the management of hypertension and coronary artery disease, sadly, none so far has been devoted to prevention of cardiovascular problems.

Attempts are made to educate the public. But these have been too few and far between with no serious gesture to reach out to all sector of society.

The past decade saw the proliferation of cardiovascular subspecialty societies but never has there been one with education as its primary goal.

Time can't wait and something had to be done!

THE BIRTH OF THE FOUNDATION

It was then in the dead of winter, while walking desolately the entertainment streets of New York City that the thought of organizing a foundation solely addressing the matter of education of the Filipino community in regard to heart diseases dawned on me.

Thus, during the closing ceremony of the 5th National Annual Convention of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Society on the 6th of February, 1999, the idea was announced.

The Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission stamped its seal of approval giving the Foundation a legal personality on September 2, 1999.

And in the midst of the 7th World Congress of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention held at the Philippine International Convention Center, the Foundation was formally launched on February 22, 2000 graced by luminaries and world authorities on preventive cardiology.

THE PERSONALITIES BEHIND THE FOUNDATION

The governing body of the Foundation is a Board composed by formidable trustees headed by Mr. Jose S. Concepcion as chairman, with Mrs. Chito Madrigal Collantes, Mrs. Imelda O. Cojuangco, Mrs. Nellie U. Bengzon, Dr. Alberto G. Romulo, Mr. Johnny T. Litton, Mrs. Marixi Rufino Prieto, Dr. Adolfo B. Bellosillo and Dr. Perfecto O. Palafox, as members.

The executive committee is headed by Founding President Dr. Adolfo B. Bellosillo supported by Dr. Vincent Valencia as secretary, Dr. Eleanor Lopez as treasurer, and Dr. Alberto Atilano, Ms Chichi Laperal, Dr. Efren Vicaldo and Dr. Ken Villanueva.

Recognizing the facilitating and coordinating rules that certain governmental agencies may play in the conduct of the activities of the Foundation, partnership with the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Interior and Local Government was sought resulting in the signing of a memorandum of agreement on July 30, 2001 with Dr. Manuel Dayrit (Health), Hon. Raul Roco (Education) and Hon. Jose Lina (DILG).

A body of regional consultants composed of Mrs. Letty Syquia, Mrs. Ces Manalo and Mr. Mars Lambino was organized to lend support to the provincial activities of the Foundation.

Recruiting volunteers gifted with thorough knowledge of heart diseases and effective communication skills resulted in a faculty of:

ACTIVITIES OF THE FOUNDATION

I Public Forum

1. May 3, 2000	College Assurance Plan
2. June 9, 2000	RFM Corporation
3. June 12, 2000	Department of Tourism
4. June 28, 2000	Department of Health
5. August 18, 2000	Cultural Center of the Philippines
6. August 21, 2000	Department of Education
7. September 15, 2000	Philippine National Bank
8. October 27, 2000	Phil. Amusement and Gaming Corp.
9. November 6, 2000	Dept. of Interior and Local Government
10. November 10, 2000	Phil. Charity Sweepstakes Office
11. February 14, 2001	Dept. of Foreign Affairs
12. March 3, 2001	Valle Verde V Homeowners Assn.
13. March 11, 2001	Valle Verde II Homeowners Assn.
14. April 25, 2001	Development Bank of the Phil.
15. May 4, 2001	Dept. of Finance
16. May 30, 2001	Dept. of Social Welfare and Development
17. June 13, 2001	Bangko Central Ng Pilipinas (Main Office)
18. July 6, 2001	Assn. of Generals and Flag Officers, AFP
19. August 6, 2001	Malacanang
20. September 3, 2001	Dept. of Agrarian Reforms
21. September 24, 2001	Dept. of Agriculture
22. September 28, 2001	Bangko Central Ng Pilipinas (Quezon City)
23. October 26, 2001	The National Library
24. November 8, 2001	National Conference of Public Librarians
25. November 9, 2001	Bureau of Customs
26. November 16, 2001	Civil Service Commission
27. November 23, 2001	Ayala Land Management Team
28. November 29, 2001	Miriam College
29. December 15, 2001	Shrine of Mary Help of Christians Better Living
30. January 11, 2002	The Roman Catholic Archbishopric of Manila
31. January 14, 2002	The Provincial Government of Pampanga
32. February 9, 2002	Makati Medical Center
33. February 14, 2002	Industrial Technology Institute
34. February 22, 2002	Dept. of Health
35. March 8, 2002	TESDA
36. March 9, 2002	Rotary Club (District 3780)
37. March 13, 2002	Rotary Club of Metro Santa Mesa
38. April 21, 2002	Ayala Land, Inc.
39. April 22, 2002	Batangas Provincial Gov't
40. May 3, 2002	Batangas City Gov't
41. May 18, 2002	Greenhills Christian Fellowship
42. June 7, 2002	Cavite Provincial Gov't
43. June 10, 2002	Pasay City Gov't
44. October 7, 2002	Fort Bonifacio Officers Club
45. October 12, 2002	St. Mathew College (San Mateo, Rizal)
46. November 8, 2002	Central Post Office
47. November 11, 2002	Presidential Security Group
48. November 20, 2002	National Convention of Public Librarians
49. November 25, 2002	Daughters of St. Paul (Pasay City)
50. December 15, 2002	St. Scholastica College
51. January 25, 2003	Congregation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master
52. January 27, 2003	Phil. Air Force
53. February 2, 2003	RMN Radio Station
54. February 14, 2003	PNCC Skyway Corporation
55. February 18, 2003	U.P. College of Human Kinetics
56. February 24, 2003	Las Pinas City Health Office
57. March 5, 2003	Congressional Ladies Assn. of the Phil.
58. April 23, 2003	Cavite Provincial Health Office
59. April 25, 2003	Phil. Charity Sweepstakes Office
60. May 16, 2003	Cong. Ernesto Echiverri Dist. Of Caloocan
61. May 22, 2003	VRP Medical Center
62. June 2, 2003	Phil. Fisheries Development Authority
63. June 5, 2003	Colegio de San Lorenzo (Caloocan)
64. July 3, 2003	Schools' Division Superintendent of Makati
65. July 5, 2003	Calamba Medical Society
66. July 12, 2003	Provincial Gov't of Pangasinan
67. July 15, 2003	Schools' Division Superintendent of Mandaluyong
68. July 17, 2003 Schools'	Division Superintendent of Pasig & San Juan
69. July 24, 2003	Far Eastern University
70. July 31, 2003	Schools' Division Superintendent of Caloocan
71. August 8, 2003	Phil. School of Business Administration
72. August 14, 2003	Norwegian Missionary Alliance (San Juan)
73. August 16, 2003	Pleasant Mount School (Antipolo City)
74. August 21, 2003	Mapua Institute of Techonology
75. August 23, 2003	Los Banos Medical Society (UP and IRRI)
76. August 28, 2003	Our Lady of Perpetual Succor (Marikina City)
77. August 30, 2003	Rotary Club District 3780, RC of Metro Sta. Mesa)
78. September 13, 2003	Sta. Cruz (Laguna) Medical Society
79. September 16, 2003	Dept. of Agriculture
80. September 18, 2003	Correctional Institution for Womena (Quota Int.)
81. September 20, 2003	Cabuyao Medical Society
82. September 22, 2003	Pasig City Office of the Mayor (WAVE)
83. September 25, 2003	Philippine Medical Assn (Quezon City)
84. September 27, 2003	San Pedro (Laguna) Medical Society
85. September 29, 2003	Pasig City Office of the Mayor (POWER)
86. September 30, 2003	Lyceum of the Phil.
87. October 1, 2003	Dept. of Agrarian Reforms
88. October 2, 2003	E. Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology
89. October 16, 2003	International Rice Research Institute
90. October 29, 2003	Mapua Institute of Techonology (Makati City)
91. October 30, 2003	Sta. Rosa (Laguna) Medical Society
92. November 8, 2003	TEMIC Automotive Phil.
93. November 10, 2003	St. Paul's College of Manila
94. November 12, 2003	Diabetic Club of Alfonso, Cavite
95. November 13, 2003	Star of Hope
96. November 15, 2003	Capiz Medical Society
97. November 21, 2003	Immaculate Concepcion of Antipolo City
98. November 25, 2003	Binan (Laguna) Medical Society
99. November 28, 2003	Colegio de San Lorenzo, Macabebe (Pampanga)
100. November 29, 2003	Quota Int., Rotary Club (Ortigas Center), RFM Corp.
101. December 10, 2003	National Economic Development Authority
102. December 12, 2003	Bulacan State University
103. December 13, 2003	Angeles City
104. December 15, 2003	Sariaya (Quezon) Medical Society
105. December 20, 2003	Healthline and DZEC
106. January 28, 2004	Rotary Club of Makati North
107. February 7, 2003	Church of Risen Lord, Diliman, Q.C.
108. February 13, 2004	Lucena, Quezon
109. February 16, 2004	Rotary Club of Makati South
110. February 19, 2004	Rotary Club of Ortigas Center
111. February 20, 2004	Bangko Sengtral Ng Pilipinas (Q.C.)
112. February 21, 2004	Young Once of Blue Ridge (Q.C.)
113. March 5, 2004	Dagupan City
114. March 13, 2004	University of the Phil., Los Banos (Laguna)
115. March 16, 2004	Manila Polo Club
116. March 21, 2004	Tayabas, Quezon
117. March 22, 2004	Lucban, Quezon
118. April 4, 2004	Barangay Forbes Park
119. April 15, 2004	Diabetic Club of Cavite, Trece Martirez City
120. April 24, 2004	San Pablo City (Laguna)
121. May 17, 2004	Colegio de San Lorenzo (Q.C.)
122. June 2, 2004	Our Lady of Perpetual Succor College, Marikina City
123. June 5, 2004	St. Mary Magdalene Parish, Magdalena (Laguna)
124. June 11, 2004	Center for Health Development, Cordillera Administrative Division (Baguio City)
125. July 16, 2004	General Agents and Management Associations
126. July 23, 2004	Santa Rosa, Laguna
127. July 24, 2004	Hope Christian Academy, Fairview (Q.C.)
128. August 1, 2004	Colegio de la Purisima Concepcion (Roxas City)
129. August 9, 2004	Camp Vicente Lim, Canlubang (Laguna)
130. August 17, 2004	Rizal (Laguna) Elementary School
131. September 11, 2004	Municipal Gov't of Santo Tomas, Batangas
132. September 13, 2004	University of Makati
133. September 18, 2004	Dept. of Health, Baguio City
134. September 21, 2004	Quezon City Medical Society
135. September 30, 2004	Senior Citizens of Binmaley (Pangasinan)
136. October 2, 2004	Quezon Medical Society (Lucena City)
137. October 11, 2004	Capiz State University (Roxas City)
138. November 18, 2004	University of the Phil., College of Medicine Employees
139. November 20, 2004	Senior Citizens Club of Urduja Village (Caloocan)
140. December 1, 2004	Laurel, Batangas
141. December 6, 2004	Valenzuela Health Office (Valenzuela City)
142. December 10, 2004	Manila Health Department
143. December 18, 2004	Salesian Corporators, Canlubang (Laguna)

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Membership in the FLEHD Clubs is awarded to a company, organization or person who has extended substantial and invaluable support during the first five years making possible the 143 Public Fora, the five Annual Conventions, the three Regional Assemblies and the Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology.

Membership carries with it privileges, like: priority to the number and location of booth spaces, sponsorship of lunch symposia, special lectures, snacks and other activities during annual conventions, regional assemblies and barangay health workers workshop on Preventive Cardiology, automatic notification of every important event scheduled, etc.

TOPICS DISCUSSED DURING PUBLIC FORUM (whole morning)

1. "Know Your Heart and How It Works"
2. "Heart Attack: How Do I Know I Am Having It"
3. "Hypertension: The Silent Killer"
4. "Cholesterol: The Good and the Bad"
5. "Smoke Gets In Your Heart"
6. "Exercise To Your Heart's Content"
7. "Sex and the Heart: Fact and Fiction"

EXTRA FREE SERVICES (whole afternoon)

1. Blood Pressure Screening
2. Blood Examination for Cholesterol and Sugar
3. Electrocardiogram
4. Medical Evaluation

II NATIONAL ANNUAL CONVENTIONS ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

(For Physicians and Health Care Professionals)

1. First National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
   (theme: "Preventive Cardiology: Its Time Has Come")
   Hotel Intercontinental, Makati City
   August 23,-24, 2001
2. Second National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
   (theme: "Preventive Cardiology for All Health Care Professionals")
   The National Library
   January 17-18, 2002
3. Third national Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
   (theme: "Slashing Cardiovascular Mortality and Morbidity the Preventive Cardiology Way")
   Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium
   RCBC Plaza, Makati City
   January 16-17, 2003
4. Fourth National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
   (theme: "Risk Factor Modification for Effective Cardiovascular Mortality and Morbidity Reduction")
   Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium
   RCBC Plaza, Makati City
   January 22-23, 2004

III REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

(For Physicians and Health Care Professionals in Specific Regions in the Country)

1. First Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
   Region VI - Capiz
   College Assurance Audiorium Roxas City
   June 1-2, 2002
2. Second Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
   Region II - Pangasinan
   Pangasinan Regency Hotel]
   Calasiao, Pangasinan
   July 10-11, 2003
3. Third Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
   Region IV - Laguna, Splash Mountain Resort
   Los Banos, Laguna
   June 25-26, 2004

IV BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS WORKSHOP ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

(For non-professional volunteer health workers)

1. First Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
   Sta. Cruz Cultural Center
   Sta. Cruz, Laguna
   October 26-27, 2004

V FLEHD FACULTY SEMINAR

1. 1ST FLEHD Faculty Seminar on Preventive Cadiology
   August 14-15, 2004
   Oasis Hotel
   Los Banos, Laguna
2. 2nd FLEHD Faculty Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
   October 23, 2004
   Splash Mountain Resort
   Los Banos, Laguna

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The organizing committee of the 5th Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology wishes to acknowledge with deepest appreciation the invaluable support of the following friends:

Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Merck, Abott, Sanofi Aventis, Therapharma, Boehringer Ingelheim, Roche, Glaxo Smith Kline, Metropolitan Pharma, Servier, Hi Eisai, Cardiodynamics, Medical One, Pascual Laboratories, Natrapharma, Novartis, Boots, Davenben Enterprises Corp., UCB, Gardenia, Garsworth, Pharma Nutria, Solvay Pharma, LRI, PAGCOR, RG Meditron, Bristol Myers Squibb, Bayer, Takeda, Golden Nutrition Food Corp., Johnson and Johnson Customer and Marketing Services, Sunpab Health Care Products, Ayala Land Sales, Inc., Citibank

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ON ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

O AUDITORIUM RCBC PLAZA, Ayala Avenue, Makati City
hysicians and Preventive Cardiology"

1 - THUR. JAN. 27, 2005

0	REGISTRATION	
	SPECIAL SYMPOSIUM ON: "Emerging Risk Factors in Atherosclerosis"	
	Dr. Cesar Yap (Capiz Chapter)	
0	Hypemomocysteinemia and Endothelial Dysfunction	Dr. Adolfo Bellosillo
0	Association Between Atherosclerosis and Infectious Agents	Dr. Eduardo Caguioa
0	C-Reactive Protein, Inflammation and Coronary Risk	Dr. Romeo Santos
0	STRESS DOWNLOAD VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
	SYMPOSIUM ON: ACE Inhibition and Angiotensin II Blockade"	
	Dr. Matias Apistar (Iloilo Chapter)	
0	Enalapril Maleate: The Preferred Choice for Effective ACE Inhibition	Dr. Kurt Glenn Jacoba
0	The Latest on Angiotensin II Receptor Blockade	Dr. Don Maranon
0	DISCUSSION Moderator: Dr. Patricio Palmes (Iloilo Chapter)	
0	LUNCH AND ENTERTAINMENT	PASCUAL
	WOW PHILIPPINES Laguna	Laguna Chapter
	"Gaano Ko Ikaw Kamahal"	Cesar Flores
	"Maalaala Mo Kaya"	Dr. Antonio Chua
	"Ang Tangi Kong Pagibig"	Dr. Ricky del Fuerte
	"Selebrasyon" (a technico-ethnico showcase)	Binan Medical Society
	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
0	OPENING CEREMONIES FLEHD 5th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AWARDS	
	nce of Colors	Dr. Vincent Valencia Dr. Zona-da Uy Dr. Jesus Canto Dr Rosario Bernal Dr. Milo Pampengco Dr. Cesar Yap Dr. Jean Tenefrancia Dr. Ponciano Aberin Dr. Karla Rhea Posadas Dr. Matias Apistar Dr. Lucita Jalbuena Dr. Faith Go Dr. Ruben Arcilla
	ation	Dr. Ken Villanueva
	ng of the Official D Prayer yer To Serve"	Jai Sabas Aracama, mezzo soprano Mrs. Bella Villanueva Dr. Ken Villanueva Jimboy Calisang, pianist
	nsang Awit	Dr. Joel Abanilla
	Hymn	Jai Sabas Aracama, mezzo soprano Mrs. Bella Villanueva Dr. Ken Villanueva Jimboy Calisang, pianist
	tion of Guests	Dr. Efren Vicaldo
	of Welcome	Mr. Jose S. Concepcion FLEHD Board Chairman
	onal Songs of FLEHD mpossible Dream" o Every Mountain"	Jai Sabas Aracama, mezzo soprano Jimboy Calisang, pianist
	orious Years of FLEHD	Dr. Adolfo Bellosillo
	ment of title to FLEHD Faculty	DFA Sec. Alberto Romulo FLEHD Trustee Dr. Vincent Valencia FLEHD Secretary
X	Awarding of Certificates of Appreciation and certificate of Corporate Membership in FLEHD'S Clubs	Mr. Jose S. Concepcion Dr. Ophelia Manlapit 5th Anniversary Committee Chair
XI	Formal Presentation of the FLEHD Officers	Dr. Adolfo Bellosillo
XII	Induction of: Dr. Jesus Canto, president and Dr. Luciano Fernandez, Chairman, FLEHD Pangasinan Chapter	Mrs. Chito Madrigal Collantes FLEHD Trustee
XIII	Induction of the officers and faculty of FLEHD Iloilo Chapter	Mrs. Imelda Cojuangco FLEHD Trustee
XIV	Induction of the officers and faculty of FLEHD Misamis Occidental Chapter	Mrs. Marixi Rufino Prieto FLEHD Trustee
XV	"ANDRES"	Philippine Ballet Theater Choreography: Gener Caringal
XVI	Opening of the Exhibits	Mrs. Chito Madrigal Collantes Mrs. Imelda O. Cojuangco Mrs. Marixi Rufino Prieto Mrs. Nellie U. Bengzon Mrs. Ces Manalo Mrs. Letty Syquia Atty. Roman Romulo Mr. Mara Lambino
XV	Cocktails	SANOFI AVENTIS

Mr. Johnny Litton
FLEHD Trustee
EMCEE

DAY 2 - FRI. JAN. 28, 2005

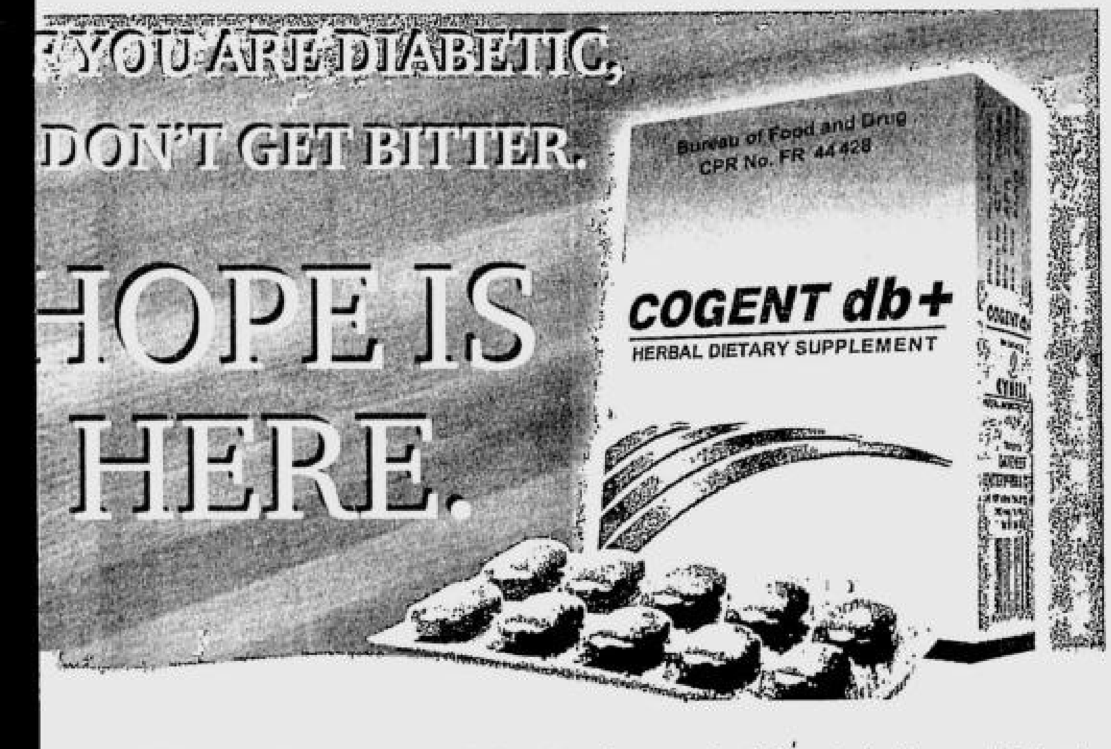
0730 – 0830	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION I Chair: Dr. Jaime Vizcayno (Pangasinan Chapter)	
0830 – 0900	Pathophysiological and Pathogenetic Aspects of Hypertension	Dr. Cesar Recto
0900 – 0930	The Diagnosis and Evaluation of the Hypertensive Patient	Dr. Leandro Bongosia
0930 – 1000	Systolic and Diastolic Hypertension: Clinical Implications of Each	Dr. Elson Sedilla
1000 – 1030	STRESS DOWNLOAD VISIT THE EXHIBITS	MEDICAL ONE
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION II Chair, Dr. Jesus Diaz (Capiz Chapter)	
1030 – 1100	The Roles of Chest X-ray, ECG and Echocardiography in Hypertension	Dr. Norberto Lingling Uy
1100 – 1130	Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring: Usefulness and Indications	Dr. Mariano Lopez
1130 – 1200	Hypertension and Dyslipidemia: Increasing Risks of CV Events	Dr. Vincent Valencia
1200 – 1230	DISCUSSION Moderator: Dr. Zenaida Torres (Laguna Chapter)	
1200 – 1400	LUNCH ENTERTAINMENT: "Fever"	PFIZER U.P. Medrhythmics Choreography: Julius Ebreo
	"The Saga of a Coronary Man"	Philippine Ballet Theater Choreography: Gener Caringal Music: Jesse Lucas Story: Adolfo Bellosillo MD
	Dr. Angelita Aguirre EMCEE	
	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION III Chair: Dr. Ernesto Naval, Jr. (Laguna Chapter)	
1400 – 1430	Hypertension and Pregnancy	Dr. May Ann Lao
1430 – 1500	The combination of ACE Inhibitor and Calcium Blocker for Effective Blood Pressure Control	Dr. Joel Abanilla
1500 – 1530	STRESS DOWNLOAD VISIT THE EXHIBITS	CARDIODYNAMICS
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION IV Chair Dr Jean Tenefrancia (Capiz Chapter)	
1530 – 1600	Monitoring Patients for Hemodynamic Derangement	Dr. Adolfo Bellosillo
1600 – 1630	Unstable Angina: Pathophysiology, Assessment and Prevention of Adverse Outcome	Dr. Saturnino Javier
1630 – 1700	DISCUSSION Moderator Dr Edwin Tucay (National)	
1700 – 1730	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
1730 -	FLEHD FACULTY AND CHAPTER RECEPTION AND MEETING Chairs Dr Helen Ong Dr Roland de los Reyes	Pfizer Center 6811 Ayala Avenue

DAY 3 - SAT. JAN. 29, 2005

0730 – 0830	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION V Chair. Dr. Federico Santos (Pangasinan Chapter)	
0830 – 0930	SYMPOSIUM ON "Cardiovascular Diseases The Magnitude of the Problem in the Different Regions in the Philippines" Dr Luciano Fernandez (Pangasinan Chapter) Dr Cesar Yap (Capiz Chapter) Dr Enrique del Fuerte (Laguna Chapter) Dr Ponciano Aberin (Cordillera Autonomous Region Chapter)	
0930 - 0945	The Prevalence of Hypertension and the Correlation of Risk Factors in the Adult Population of Seven Barangays in Sto Tomas, Batangas	Dr. Jose Donato Magno
0945 – 1000	Facilitation of Small Group Discussions A Needs Assessment Intervention Program For the Barangay Health Workers	Dr Joanna Nunez
1000 – 1030	STRESS DOWNLOAD VISIT THE EXHIBITS	ABBOTT
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION VI Chair. Dr Achilles Esguerra (National)	
1030 – 1100	The Antioxidants: Its Role in Atherogenesis	Dr Alberto Atilano
1100 - 1130	Omega 3 Fatty Acids in the Early Prevention of Atherosclerosis in Children	Dr. Arturo Ludan
1130 – 1200	High Density Lipoprotein. Its Link to Atherogenesis and How Best to Control It	Dr Adolfo Bellosillo
1200 – 1230	DISCUSSION Moderator. Dr. Vivian Serrano (National)	
1230 – 1400	LUNCH ENTERTAINMENT I Welkomen	MERCK FLEHD Chapters Dr Joel Abanilla Dr Alberto Atilano Dr. Leandro Bongosia
	II Songs from "Les Miserables" "Star" "I Dreamed A Dream" "On My Own"	Dr Antonio Chua (Laguna) Dr. Marge Malabanan (Laguna) Dr Consolacion Boen (Capiz)
	"Master of the House" "Drink With Me" "Bring Him Home" "Empty Chairs and Empty Tables" "Do You Hear the People Sing"	Ms Marlona Cristobal (Pangasinan) Dr Cesar Yap (Capiz) Dr Richard Arceo (CAR) Dr Dante Galbines (Capiz) Dr Ronnie Maramba (Pangasinan)
	III Interpretative Numbers "Mein Herr" from Cabaret "Only Time" by Enya	Dr Agnes Tan U.P. Medrhythmics
	IV Community Singing "Those Were The Days" "There is Nothing Like A Dame" "Ang Bayan Ko"	Dr Alberto Atilano Dr Joel Abanilla Dr Leandro Bongosia
	May Ann Lao, M.D EMCEE	
	VISIT THE EXHIBITS	
	SCIENTIFIC SESSION VII Chair: Dr. Milo Pampengco (Laguna Chapter)	
1400 – 1430	Vertigo and Cerebrovascular Insufficiency	Dr. Levi Rejuso
1430 – 1500	Obesity: A Global Epidemic	Dr. Ruby Go
1500 – 1530	A Case for Calcium Antagonist and Beta Blockade in Hypertension	Dr. Luis T. Go
1530 – 1600	STRESS DOWNLOAD VISIT THE EXHIBITS	DAVENBEN ENTERPRISES CORP
1600 – 1630	Ayurveda An Alternative Approach to Diabetes Mellitus with Special Reference to Cardiology	Prof. Dr. K. Chandra Shekar
1630 – 1700	Coconut Oil: The Philippines' Best Weapon in The Fight Against Atherosclerosis	Dr. Conrado Dayrit
1700 – 1730	STRESS DOWNLOAD VISIT THE EXHIBITS	ASTRAZENECA
1730	ORATORICAL CONTEST: "Preventive Cardiology Its Time Has Come and Act We Must Now"	
	FLEHD Prayer	Jai Sabas Aracama, mezzo soprano Il Gruppo di Nobello II Jimboy Calisang, pianist
	Pambansang Awit	FLEHD Capiz Chapter
	The FLEHD Hymn	Jai Sabas Aracama, mezzo soprano Il Gruppo di Nobello II Jimboy Calisang, pianist
	Words of Welcome	Mr Jose S. Concepcion FLEHD Board Chairman
	Introduction of Guest Speaker	Dr. Eleanor Lopez
	Address: "The Medical Schools and Preventive Cardiology"	Dr Cecilia Tomas Dean, U. P. College of Medicine
	Rules of the Contest	Dr Vincent Valencia Chair Oratorical Contest Committee
	Introduction of the Board of Judges	Dr Adolfo Bellosillo FLEHD President
	Finalist No. 1 Finalist No. 2	
	Musical Refrain: "Habanera" "Stout Hearted Men"	Jai Sabas Aracama, mezzo soprano Jimboy Calisang, pianist
	Finalist No. 3 Finalist No. 4	
	"Mantones de Manila"	The Philippine Ballet Theater Choreography Tony Fabella Artistic Director Gener Caringal
	Announcement of Winners	Mr Alberto Manlapit Chair, Board of Judges
	Awarding of Prizes	Mr Stefan Kilian Gen. Mgr. – Managing Director Boehringer Ingelheim Mr Jose S Concepcion Chairman, FLEHD Board
	The FLEHD Hymn	ALL

Dr May Ann Lao
EMCEE

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION Credits	
Philippine Medical Association	70 units
Philippine Heart Association:	75 units
Philippine College of Physicians	20 units
Philippine Academy of Family Physicians:	17.5 units category 2



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r-lipidemia (high cholesterol, etc.) and micro-angiopathic
ns (small blood vessel injuries) that often leads to diabetic
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(Vide letter NCHP–DOH Aug. 23, 2004)

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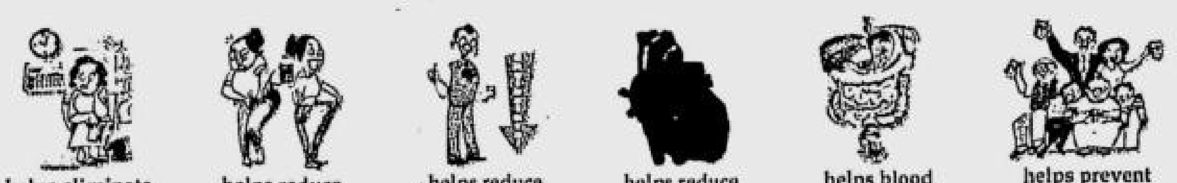

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CHRISTMAS 1996

next decade fresh
11
bench jeans
ELEVEN

1997

CHRISTMAS 1997

bench holiday

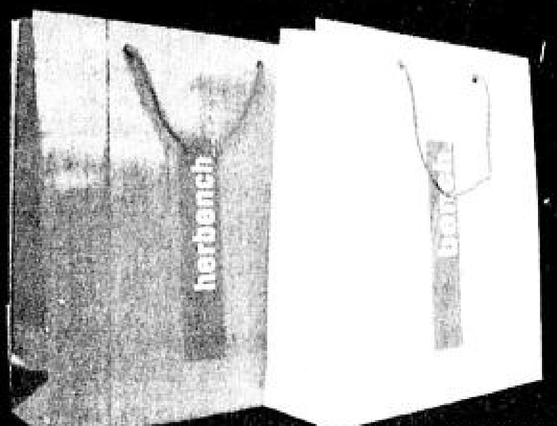
2000

2000

Portable art

bench/
manila
singapore
french
kuwait
al khobar
singapore

CLASSIC 1998


herbench
bench

CLASSIC 2001

From page C1

so successful it spawned a new line, a mix of products from cologne to accessories.

"I never imagined the effect would be phenomenal," adds Chan. He is being modest, of course. He has not been lauded as a taipan-in-the-making for nothing. Surely he knows that a shopper who buys something at Bench will be carrying that bag for hours around the mall and that's free advertising. Not only that. People like to reuse nice bags to carry their stuff to a medley of places they visit from day to day. That's additional mileage out of something made of paper.

Sharon Zukin, author of "Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture," says shopping bags are "basically mobile advertisements" and "ideal containers for a very mobile generation."

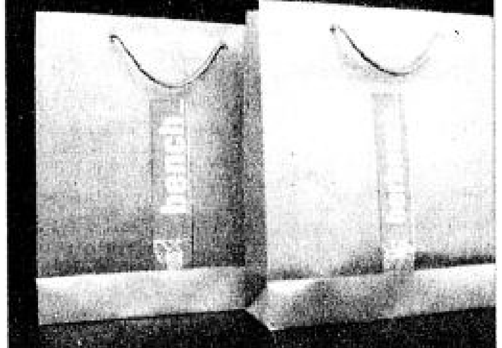
The big brands have long ago discovered the value of putting cool designs on their bags. Even a black bag that says nothing but "Gucci" can prove mesmerizing. Bloomingdale's brown paper bag is now a classic. You spot the words "Big Brown Bag" and you know in a flash that it's from Bloomingdale's.

I thought my daughter was a hopeless case, grabbing every beautiful shopping bag she sees and putting it away for safekeeping, until I read about the shopping bag exhibit at the Newark Public Library in New Jersey.

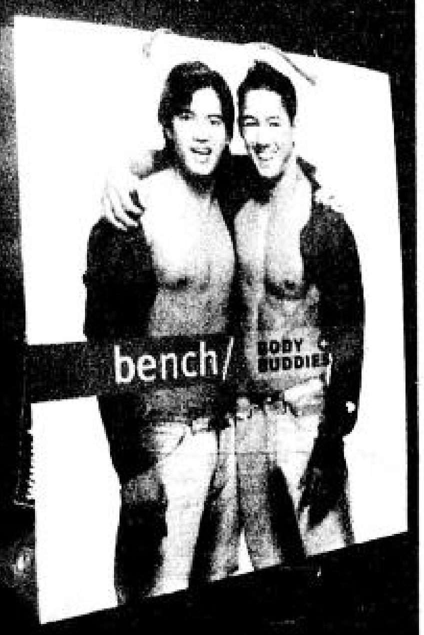
Referred to as "portable art" and originated by "leading commercial firms, shopping malls, deluxe retail stores and all sorts of merchandising outlets in the United States, European cities, and stores in countries on The Pacific Rim and the Near East," the bags have been successfully exhibited four times in the library's galleries and other sites.

Maybe it's time we put together an exhibit of our own. On this page we start the ball rolling with Bench bags from 1996 to, as Bench says it on its shopping bags, 2K.05.

Chelo Banal-Formoso



CHRISTMAS 2001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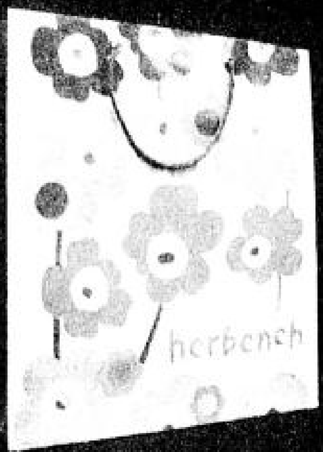
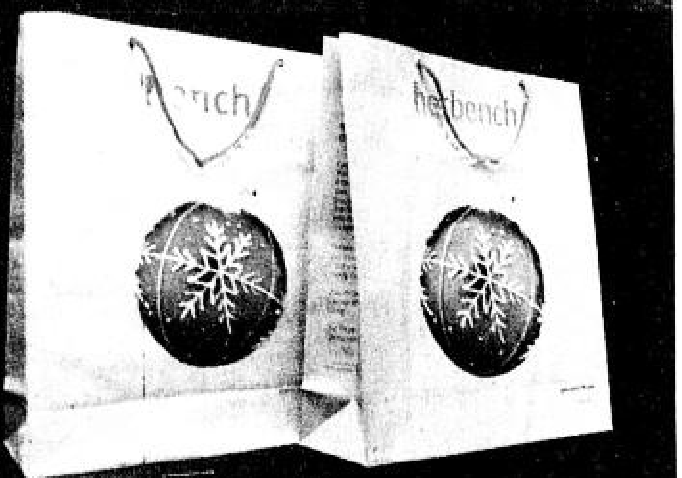
BODY BUDDIES

ANTONIO Aquitania and Marc Nelson, 2003



2001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bench is forever

FOREVER Bench endorser Richard Gomez with daughter Juliana, 2004

CLASSIC, Spring/Summer 2002

BENCH
HERBENCH

FRESHLY Squeezed, 2003

SUMMER 2004

Hot days, Cool

i groove bench/
bench/
i play bench/

I SERIES, 2004, Ben Chan's favorite

i choose bench/

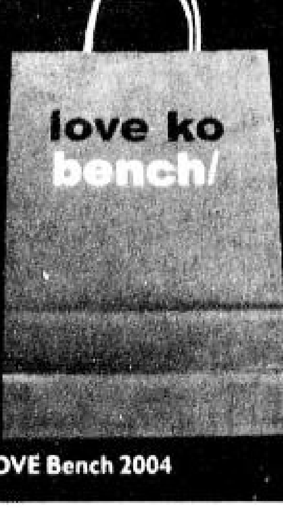
JERRY Yan, 2004

Yule Años at bench/

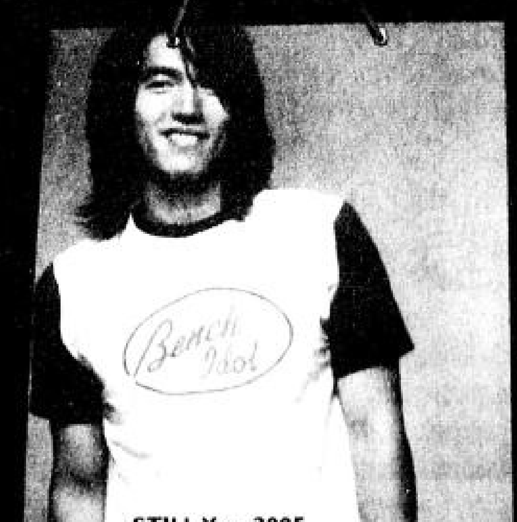
CHRISTMAS 2002

CHRISTMAS 2004

A VERRRY MERRRY BENCH


love ko bench/

I LOVE Bench 2004



STILL Yan, 2005

JASMINE Trias, 2005

PHOTOS: [illegible] PUNZALAN

DIAMONDS are forever, specially if there are 174 of them embedded and arranged in concentric circles, as in the Swatch Lustrous Bliss. Strap and loop are in white leather with reptile grain imprint. Diamonds represent approximately 0.7k. White, skeleton-shaped hour and minute hands complete the splendor. Limited to 4,000 watches, numbered sequentially.

Time-keeping, Hollywood style

SWATCH, with Lustrous Bliss, has come up with a sequel to its legendary Hollywood Dream, the crystal-studded Swatch that became a hit in the early 1990s. This time, the setting is a super thin Skin, with real diamonds.

The graphite gray dial of the new Swatch Skin is set with a total of 174 genuine diamonds arranged in concentric circles, giving Lustrous Bliss a touch of elegance.

Special packaging enhances the exclusive appeal of Lustrous Bliss.

Swatch Lustrous Bliss is available at Swatch SM Megamall Building B and Glorietta 4; and Gift Gate at SM Megamall Building B, Glorietta 2 and Alabang Town Center.

Birth of a new Republic

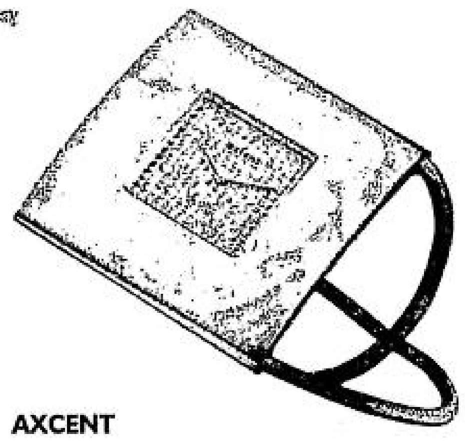
THERE'S a new shop that caters to trendy teens and stylish young adults on the lookout for the perfect timepiece.

Watch Republic carries a wide range of fun and fashionable brands that suit diverse personalities. Style-savvy customers can choose from various brands like FCUK Time, Giordano and US Army, the only watch endorsed by the US army.

The store also offers the watch currently favored by world celebrities like Robbie Williams and Kid Rock-Axcent of Scandinavia from Sweden. Outdoorsy, sporty types have good choices in Timberland, Sprandi, Reebok and Armitron.

For the fashion-savvy, there's Elite Models' Fashion watches from France, named after the top modeling agency in the world. Fiorucci is a line of avant-garde timepieces from Italy, while Morgan de Toi from France exudes style and sophistication.

Drop by Watch Republic in Powerplant Rockwell, Market! Market!, SM Fairview, SM Southmall, SM Pampanga, SM Batangas, Robinsons Pioneer, and Limketkai Mall in Cagayan de Oro City.



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OPEX

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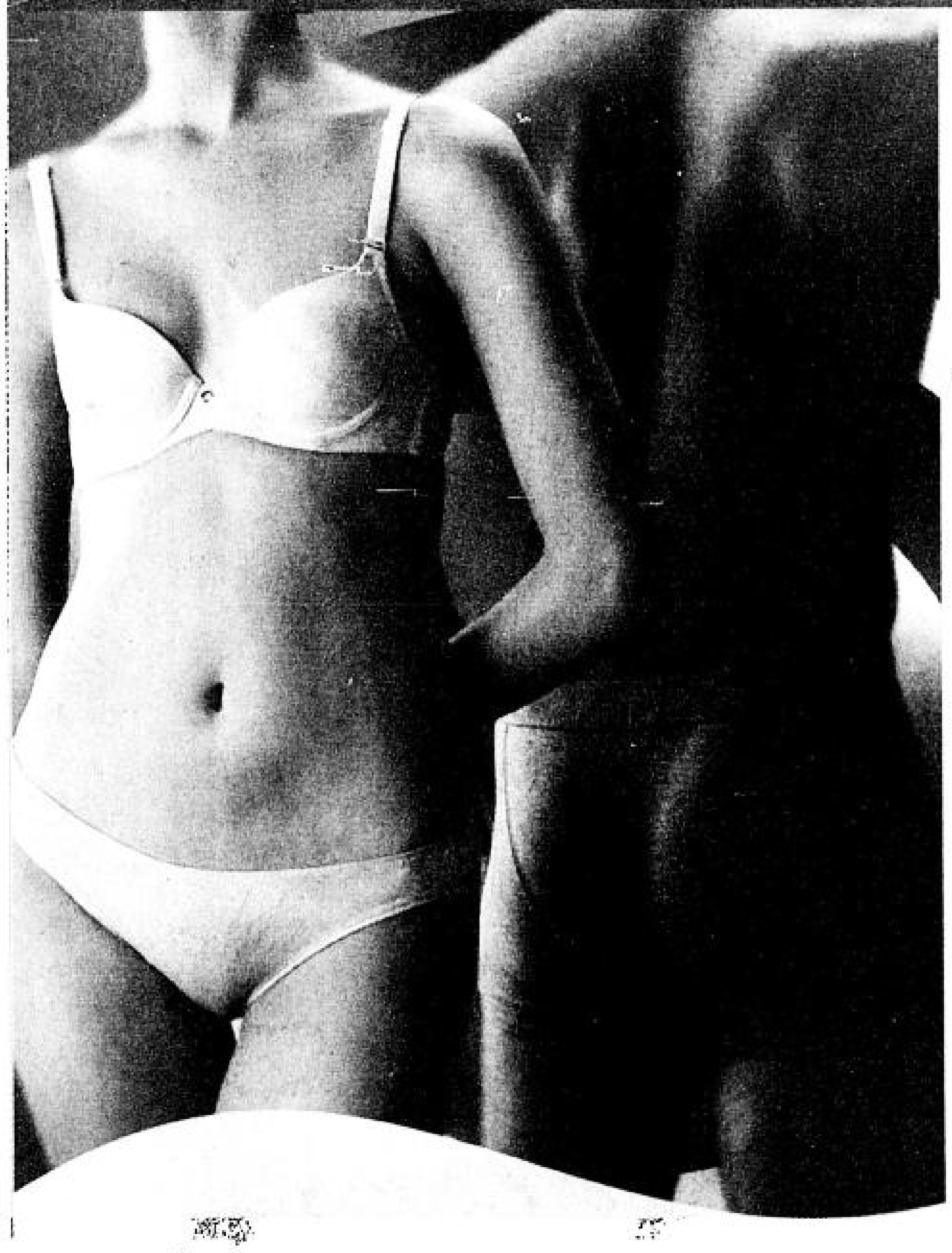

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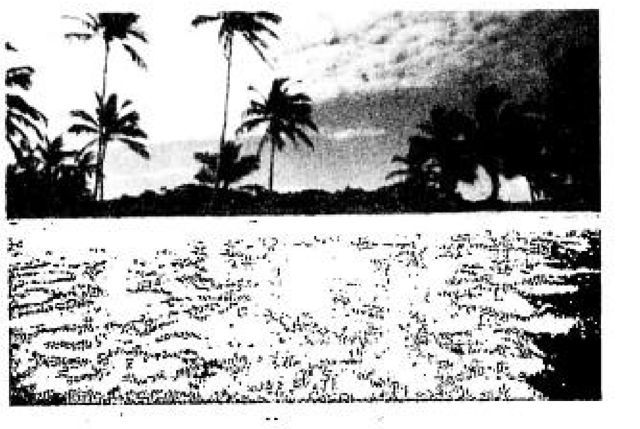

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Despite bickering, high-society event reaps rewards

World publicity makes it well worth the effort

PRINCESS Caroline of Monaco

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

ALL'S well that ends well. At least if there's one positive note in this bad news-obsessed country, it's in high society which ended last year with some rumblings and bitchings. Turned out, there was no need for the latter, after all.

Before I confuse you any further, what I'm driving at is that the well-publicized humanitarian visit here of chic **Princess Caroline** of Hannover last October has been churning out pages and pages of publicity in Europe, identifying, of course, Manila and the Philippines. And to think that factions (we're genetically a fractured society) in high society were bickering about the success of the formal benefit dinner, with some saying that it didn't generate the social wattage required, or to be specific, it was snubbed by the likes of "Meldy Co" (**Imelda Cojuangco**), who was supposed to have headed the social event.

The high society rag Hola! gave Princess Caroline's visit 16 pages of huge photos and text, including the fashion show of **Inno Sotto** presented at the event.

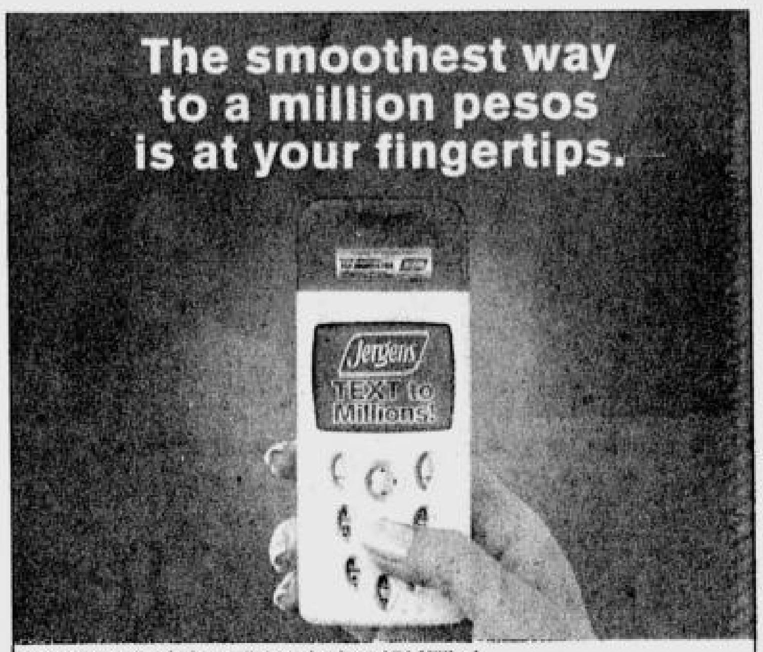
Its UK-based counterpart, Hello!, splashed it on a page. Another Spanish magazine, Lecturas, gave it a page.

Prominent in this coverage is Amade, the humanitarian organization founded in 1963 by **Princess Grace** of Monaco, Princess Caroline's icon of a mother, and Virlanie Foundation which Amade is supporting here. (It was Virlanie that organized the visit to raise funds for its many houses here for abused or abandoned children and young women.)

The photos by the team of photographers traveling with the Princess show her on her swift but hectic tour of Manila and Subic, from the Virlanie homes to Manila City Jail. Rather extensive.

That should be enough to assure the visit's organizers led by **Marietta Santos** and **Raul Manzano** that the October affair was well

DESPITE/ D3



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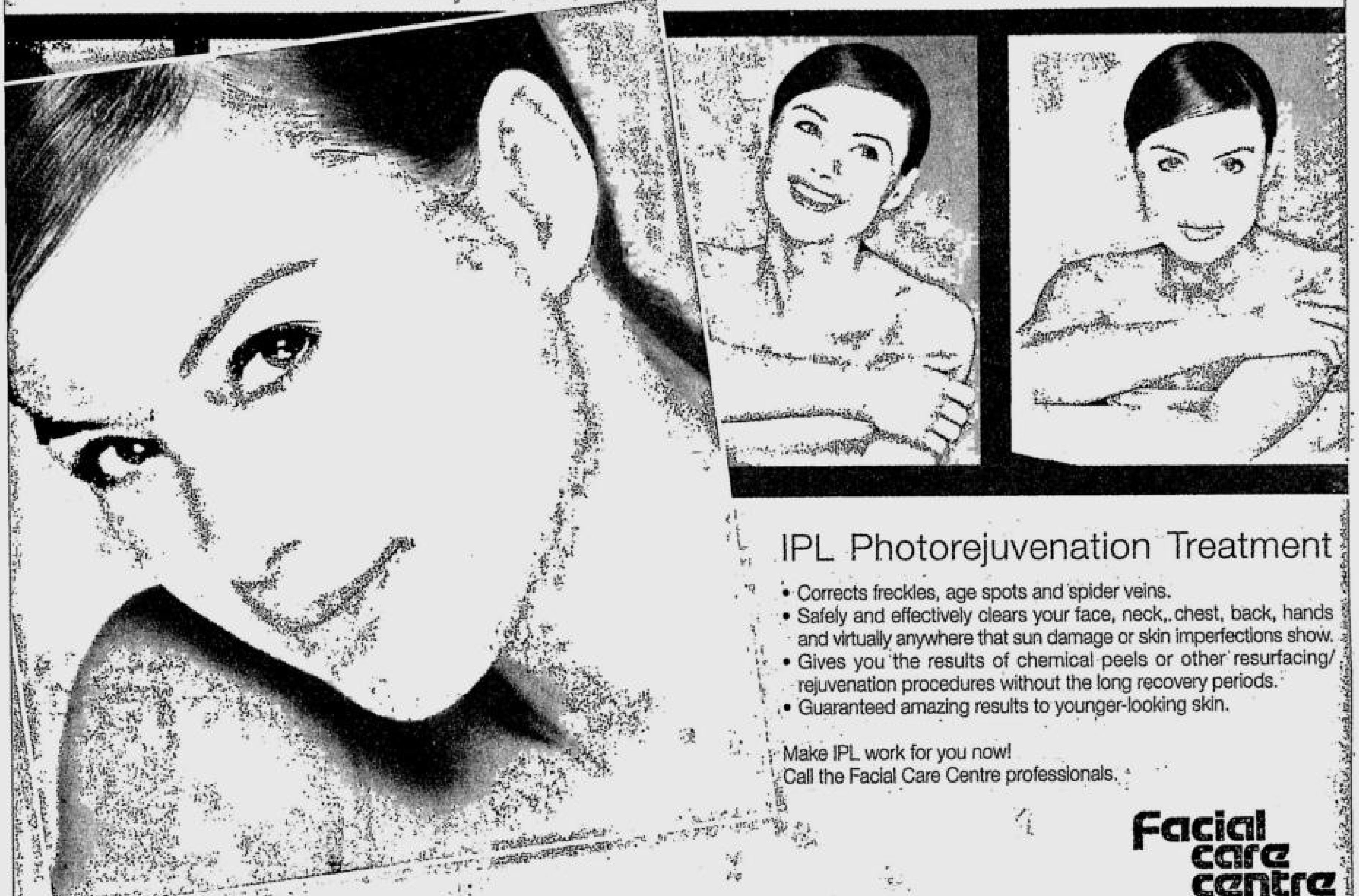

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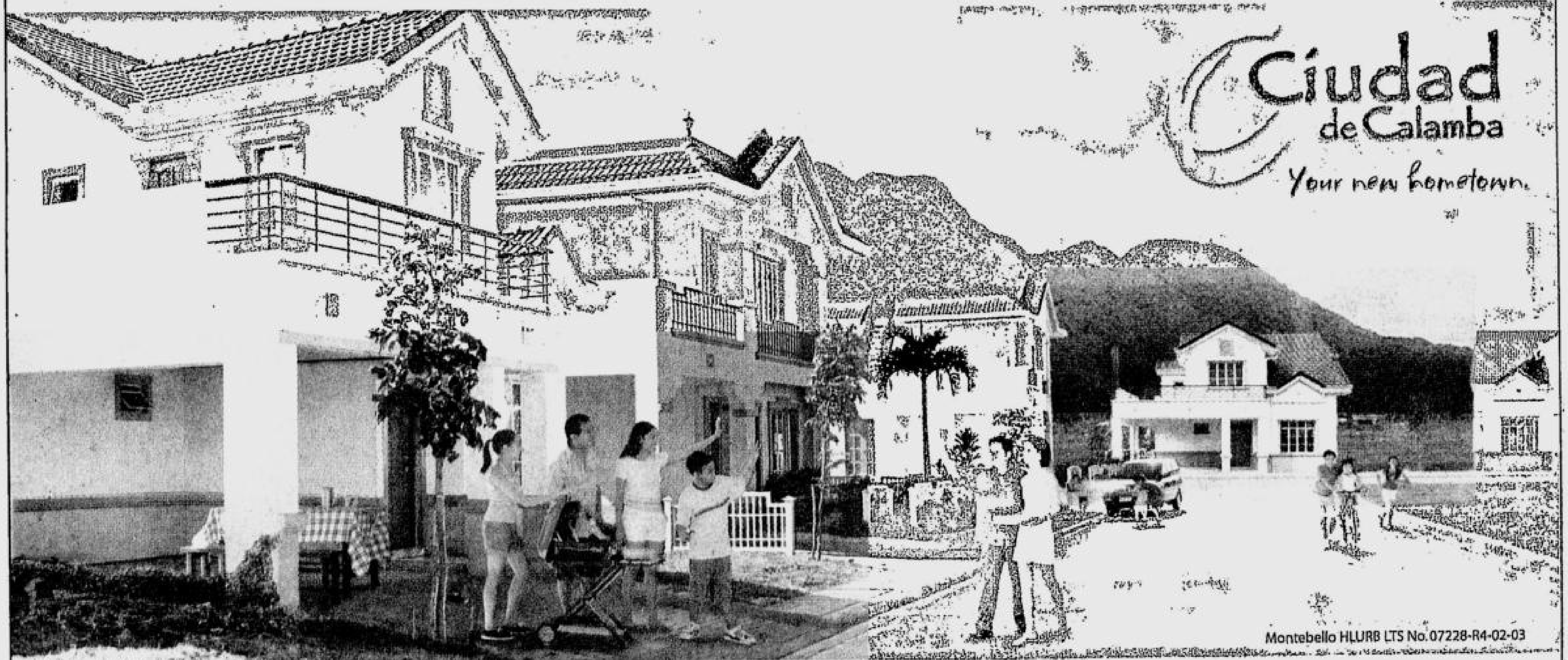

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All new: Tech mag, Zegna line, eye fashion

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak Easy Share System**

EMCEES of the affair. TV's glam gal Ces Drilon, Shirley Kwan and Pepper Teehankee

TOP actors in a row: Tirso Cruz III, Ricky Davao and Christopher de Leon

THE WOMAN of the hour, Dr. Vivian Sarabia, at work

WITH the music booming, the wine flowing and the people raving, Tech and Tuner Magazine was launched at Nuvo, Soleil and Pepato in Greenbelt 3. The affair had some help from Glade Sport from SC Johnson, Superbly hosted by 99.5 RT DJ **Lexi Schulze** and top racer **James Deakin**, the launch was a fun-filled occasion. It witnessed the birth of the country's edgiest tech magazine. The atmosphere was light and fun, *palanggas*.

There was an impressive showcase of eye-candy cars, as well as "party-hard" music all night long. *Naturellement*, the unending supply of signature drinks such as Artic Vodka and San Miguel Super Dry Beer kept everyone buzzing till way, way past midnight.

A video presentation introduced T&T magazine. Editor in chief **Kevin Limjoco** then introduced the staff.

As if the euphoric mood was not enough, dahlings, guests were treated to raffle prizes from A-toy Bodykits, Bilstein, Marks & Spencer, Omega, Prestige Cars BMW, Rustan's Wheel Gallery and Xenon Bulbs.

Chic Zegna

World-class brand **Ermenegildo Zegna** unveiled its newest chi-chi store at the ground floor of Rustan's Makati, *palanggas*.

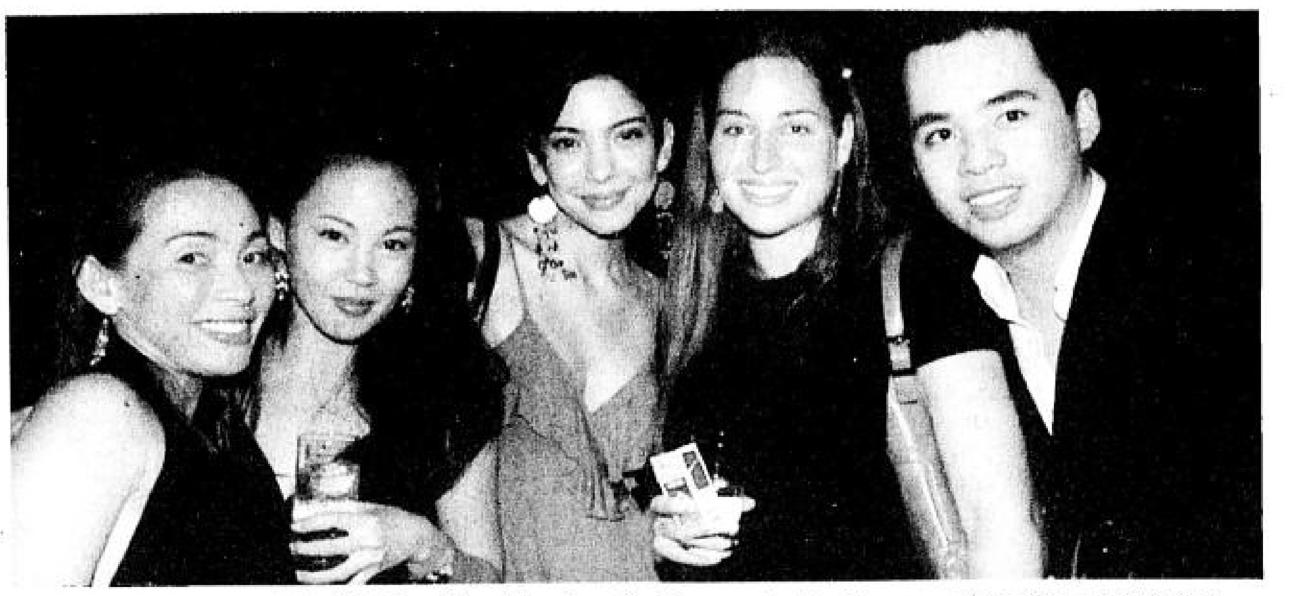
It was raining men, with Manille's most bona fide gentlemen coming to witness the latest in style and elegance from Zegna's wide selection that evening.

Getting this happening on the roll was Rustan Commercial Corporation's—and Tatler's magazine choice as one of the country's most eligible bachelors—**Joel Tantoco**, no less.

Joining him in the ceremonial toast were **Itsuro Higuchi**, managing director of Zegna Far East; and **Gigi Mabanta**, Rustan's brilliant vice president for fashion.

I couldn't help but praise the luxurious selection of dress shirts, pinstriped suits, gorgeous wool and leather jackets, plus so many other key pieces, that only Zegna could offer, dahlings.

The chic collection had deep colors: browns, blues and grays fade towards black, in pure wool and denim, with leather trimmings for that cool, hip detail.


SOME of the hot names behind the launching: Vivacious Tina Vasquez-Prada with gorgeous-looking gals Kat Abad, Amanda Griffin, Bianca Zobel and Paolo Martel

COOL couple: James de Jesus and wife Rica Tantoco de Jesus

THE MAN behind our town's best party booze, Ralph Joseph, with popular Raj Moreno

CLOSE-up time: Super pals Gay Lao, Melanie Teng-Go and Tina Sambalido

Beaming with pride at the cocktails were Zegna's business development manager, cybersmart **Ina Kazuko**; Zegna's PR and advertising manager, attractive **Mei Lin Ting**.

Among the guests were the legendary **RJ Jacinto**, my super achieving *palangga*, INQUIRER printing press head **Dennis Valdes**; metrosexual **Jacques Dupasquier**, with his gal, **Rachel Soriano**; young mover **Raj Moreno** , with **Kai Prieto**; hot interior designer and stylist **Anton Mendoza**, and *moi*, plus, so many other men of style.

Would you believe, I had one of my Christmas wish gifts come true when they announced I was the winner of a made-to-measure suit from Zegna? Wow!

Zegna is exclusively distributed by Rustan Commercial Corporation and is available at Rustan's Makati.

Check it out, people.

Eye vogue

Yes, *palanggas*, Dr. **Vivian Sarabia** has taken her rightful place as one of the country's most respected image authorities.

This I noticed immediately as we entered Vivian's newest baby, a beautifully designed shop, filled by high-end familiar brand names and gleaming mirrors dramatized by soft lighting. I saw this during the stylish launch of the Vivian Sarabia World of Optics at the 3/F Bridgeway, Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Our southern gal Vivian, who is a distinguished optometrist of Sarabia clan, is also considered the principal eyewear stylist in the Philippines, no less, dahlings.

Vivian herself will tell you, the dos and don'ts of eyewear.

"I'll be the first to say the kind of specs you wear depends on your lifestyle and should fit your personality. It really isn't just the equivalent of a makeover, but more so a transformation." Vivian told us.

Sarabia is an icon in the field of optometry and ophthalmology. It is a leading provider of the best brands. The costs range from P450 to a cool P24,000.

The Sarabia tradition continues with Vivian's son, Dr. **Francis Sarabia-Ong**, , the fourth generation to follow in Dr. Federico Sarabia's footsteps.

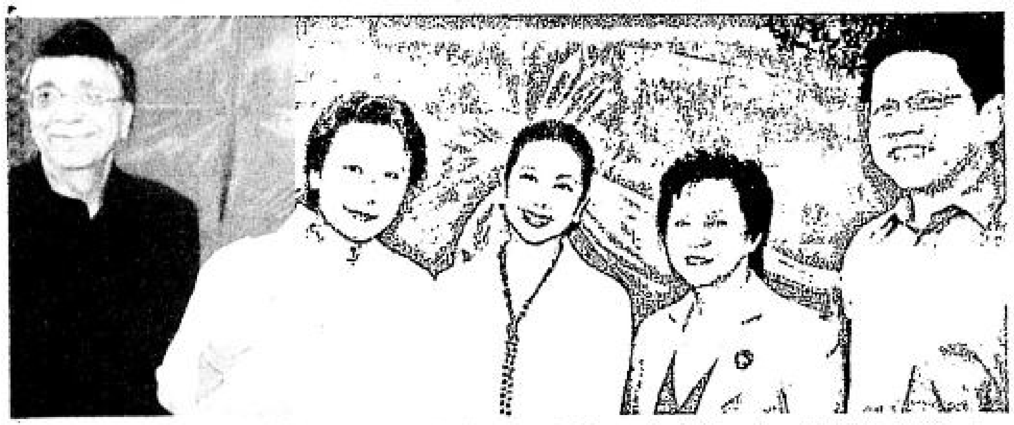
Check out Vivian's newest place, *palanggas*. I assure you, you are in expert hands.

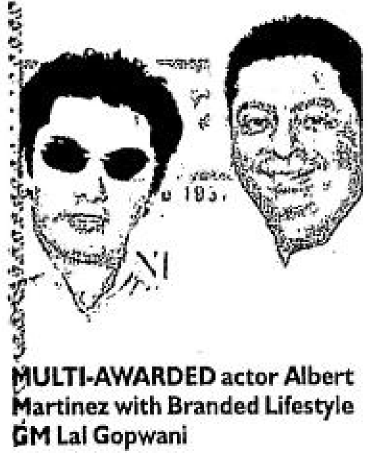
CHRISTINELimjoco and singer-actress Vina Morales

GEORGES Ramirez and Totits Adorable of Ace Saatchi

FRANCO Limjoco of Arctic Vodka with Kitty Keirulf, popular gal Patricia Cojuangco and BJ Salonga

just got better
ARVIN Lim, Sammy Liuson, Benedict Go, Kevin Limjoco and Atoy Llave


HOTSHOTS doing the ribbon-snipping: Bob Mirani of Branded Lifestyle with SM's brilliant Elizabeth Sy, Korina Sanchez, Dr. Vivian Sarabia and Mike Enriquez


MULTI-AWARDED actor Albert Martinez with Branded Lifestyle GM Lal Gopwani

DENISE Albert of Sari-Sari with Marga Montemayor of Paul Smith, handsome Mico Palanca and L'Oreal's Celine Gabriel

MICHAEL de Mesa and gorgeous Assunta da Rossi-Ledesma

IRA CRUZ with Epi Quizon, Rosanna Escudero, Geni Psinakis of Mati and Ines Delgado of the popular Itsi Bitsi

GIGI Mabanta with Zegna hotshots Itsuro Higuchi, Mei Lin Ting and Jefre Johani, and Rustan's Joel Tantoco

PITOY Moreno

INNO Sotto's fashion show

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Despite bickering, high-society event. . .

From page D1

worth the effort. The days after the dinner I remember getting a call from **Josine Elizalde** reacting to a society column that said such-and-such VIP snubbed the dinner. To make it clear, she said, those VIPs weren't invited at all.

Josine apparently was a great supporter of the event because she was also emphatic about the absence of **Chito Madrigal Collantes**, one of the society doyennes chairing the event. Ms Collantes didn't make it simply because she was sick, and as for Ms Cojuangco, well, her children were all there.

Now that the rare visit has raised the needed funds, and has been recorded gloriously and dutifully by the world media, perhaps A-list society nerves are finally soothed and broken fences mended.

Burned bridges

From fences we go to bridges, specifically, bridges that have been burned, or seemingly burned.

One of high society's most famous (or notorious) fights (and we mean fight) is that of bosom friends **Pitoy Moreno** and Dr. **Eleuterio "Teyet" Pascual**, both of them social icons—Pitoy in fashion, Teyet in art collection.

The two were the best of friends who became the worst of enemies, and I could write a book on the dynamics of such a roller-coaster relationship that involved the Who's Who in Philippine society.

For the past decade or so the two hadn't spoken a word to each other; worse, they could hardly breathe the same air. Parties where the two would be were bound to be combustible.

So it was such a pleasant surprise, to say the least, when at the wedding of Dr. **Jimmy Laya**'s daughter, Sandra, last month, the two were around—and more important were civil though they were within spitting (literally) distance of each other.

It was the second occasion they came that close physically to each other, the first being the opening of Ayala Museum last year. Common friends of the two such as **Lulu Tinio** are still hoping that the bridge between the two that have been burned (in most hilarious and scene-stealing conflagrations) would be rebuilt somehow.

After all, the two, like everybody else, aren't getting younger, but only older (not old but older). Oh, but then when and if they finally make up, the social scene might lose one of its cliff-hanger moments.

'Karangalan'

If **Nicanor Perlas**, **Panjee Lopez** and other alternative thinkers succeed with Karangalan 2005, Pinoy self-bashing would cease to be our national sport.

Perlas, who heads the Center for Alternative Development Institute, is spearheading Karangalan 2005, the first National Conference and Festival on Mobilizing Excellence to Create a Visionary Center of the Philippines. To be held today until Sunday at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, it will showcase the many talents and accomplishments of Filipinos.

It is a foil to the pervasive feeling of hopelessness about the state of affairs, about most things in the country in fact. The organizers believe that by focusing on artists, professionals, people from all walks of life who have achieved or are achieving, should assure us that the Filipino doesn't begin or end with his government, that there's more to this country than its traditional politics, that indeed Filipinos are building their nation.

And if we act and think positive, we will reap positive things. (For details, log on to www.truthforce.info)

HOLA!
DA DE
IS ALFONSO
BORBON
RGARITA
PUBLICA
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Potent age-defying potions

UNLIKE Caucasians who show age through fine lines, we Asians sag first. My aim is to find the most potent, ultra-concentrated ingredients that won't break me out.

Like most Filipinas, my skin gets shiny and pimply when I apply anti-aging creams. I know I need them because of the photos I have seen of my droopy cheeks and slightly sagging jaw line, not to mention puffiness on the face, specifically on nose, eyes and cheeks. The puffiness is apparently caused by lack of firmness.

I have been testing two products and have seen amazing results via photos. The beauty of these two discoveries? You won't need a separate eye cream, wrinkle cream and firming cream, plus they are perfectly suited for our humid weather because they are non-oily. Tip: Take good care not to get into eyes when used as eye cream.

Copper Peptide. In the '70s, when everyone was trying to find a cure for cancer and heart ailments, Dr. Loren Pickart decided to

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

concentrate on reversing human aging. He studied young cells and old cells to find out what made young cells stronger and easily repair themselves. He found a compound called Copper Peptides, which are found in larger amounts in young skin than old skin.

Pickart's first-generation copper peptide serum was blue in color and yielded great results. Still he found it to be fragile; it broke down rapidly, was short-acting, and couldn't be used with hydroxy acids.

What I have now is the second-generation copper peptide of Pickart—it is stronger and in a dark green color. It's very stable, breakdown-resistant, can be used with hydroxyl acids, and demonstrates strong skin-repair and anti-inflammatory properties for puffy faces and eye-bags.

I use the mattifying serum on my face and neck day and night. At nighttime I apply the Basic Therapy Cream and wake up with a lot less eye-bags and pillow marks that disappear under 10 minutes. How's that for firmness?

Pickart's second-generation CP works as an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. It inhibits scar formation; it also firms, elasticizes, repairs and smoothens skin. It reduces skin oil. Water-based and lipid-free, it helps skin renewal while enhancing the skin's protective barrier and anti-oxidant defenses.

COPPER-PEPTIDE
Mattifying Serum
US Patent #'s
5,302,431 & 5,888,522
COPPER-PEPTIDE
Therapy Creme
BASIC
US Patent #'s
5,302,431 & 5,888,522

DR. Loren Pickart's Copper Peptides

Lifetime Day Firming Treatment, Alpha Lipoic Acid and DMAE Serum. I first read about DMAE (Dimethylaminoethanol) and Alpha Lipoic Acid in Dr. Nicholas Perricone's best-selling book, "The Wrinkle Cure Diet," in which he recommended that people take DMAE supplements.

Topical DMAE in cream or serum form tightens facial muscles and functions as a non-surgical facelift.

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What to expect from this serum? It reduces the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, supports collagen and elastin building, and strengthens and firms the skin. It checks eczema symptoms such as dry skin and flaking, itching and redness. It protects the skin against sun-aging. It reduces large pores and scars and tightens facial muscles.

The DMAE gently exfoliates, moisturizes, nourishes and softens skin, revitalizes skin tone, color, texture and clarity. It stops skin disorders such as blemishes, acne and dullness. It gives skin a glow, reduces dark circles under the eye, and checks puffiness and eyebags. It's also a great foundation primer or men's after-shave treatment.

The serum also contains Alpha Hydroxy Acid, Grapeseed extract and Coenzyme Q10.

For Copper Peptide inquiries, call 688-8062 or e-mail jeunessemanila@yahoo.com (it only sells via doctors). The Lifetime Day Firming Treatment costs P3,300 for a huge 3-oz jar that is very concentrated. Available only at Health Express.

Two new cleansers

KANEBO Blanchir introduces two new cleansers from the Power of Red series—an oil cleanser, Make Off Conditioner (quasi-drug, 150ml); and the facial wash Clay Wash Conditioner (125g).

Make Off Conditioner and Clay Wash Conditioner absorb and remove dirt on the surface of your face. They treat skin prone to roughness and pimples, while reducing dullness for a more translucent complexion.

The clear oil cleanser from the Power of Red series removes makeup and treats blackheads and pimples. It goes deep into clogged pores to break down and absorb stubborn dirt and blackheads. It also removes unwanted keratin, including melanin, resulting in a brighter skin.

The cleanser contains anti-bacterial ingredients to make the skin more resistant to pimples. It also treats skin roughness and dryness caused by ultraviolet (UV) rays.

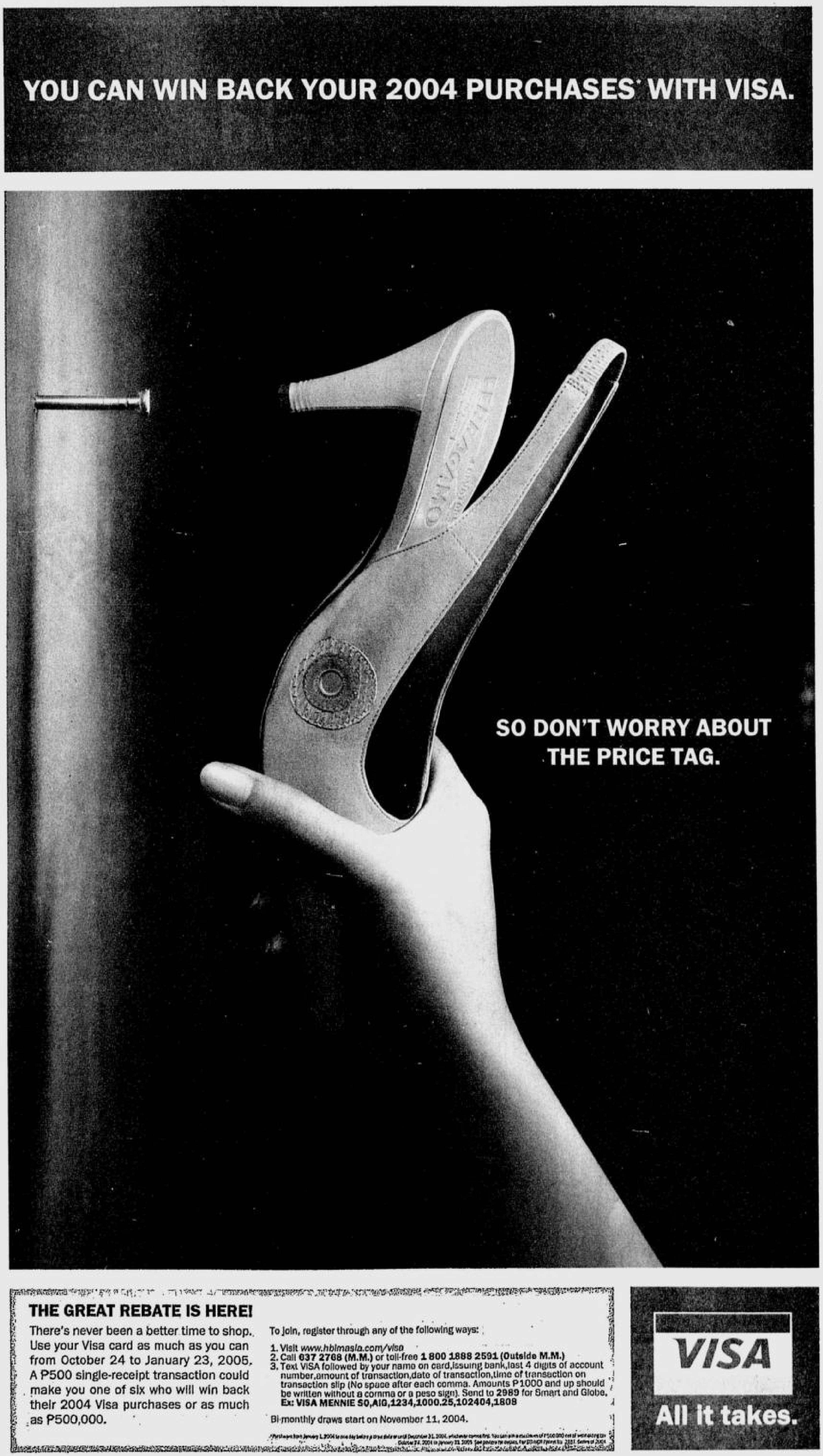
The clay cleanser from the Power of Red series removes stubborn dirt and blackheads from deep-within pores. It tightens pores for a smoother complexion.

The gentle clay removes unwanted keratin, including melanin, while helping transform damaged and dull skin into something smoother and softer. It also helps treat UV damage. Whitening and other ingredients are easily absorbed by skin.

Both products contain kakyoku, elder, adlay, strawberry and geranium.

For skin needing special care, reapply Make Off Conditioner Oil to clogged pores and areas prone to blackheads using the massage technique after removing makeup. Rinse thoroughly to break down and remove stubborn dirt from deep within pores.

To clear pores of blackheads, apply 2.5 cm of Clay Wash Conditioner to face. Wait 3-5 minutes before rinsing for brighter skin and tighter pores.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Mike Hanopol, 58, still 'jeproks' after all these rock 'n' roll years

By Nini Valera

PINOY ROCK never dies—not if you're Mike Hanopol.

Since he released his landmark album "Buhay Musikero" in 1974, and launched his solo career apart from the legendary Juan de la Cruz Band, Hanopol's music has survived disco, salsa, Hagibis, new wave, techno, new age, rap, among others. Songs he created 30 years ago like "Laki Sa Layaw, Jeproks" continue to dominate Pinoy pop music, defying age and time.

At 58, Hanopol is old even by Pinoy Rock standards. But he still rocks even if he hints of a major project in two years time that would mark the end of an era.

YESTERDAY

"It's too soon to say," he said of his project, discouraging further questions about it. Whatever he's planning, Hanopol is bound to surprise his audience.

It's the raw emotion that Hanopol invests in his songs that makes his music enduring. In songs like "Katawan," "Legs, Legs, Legs" and "No Touch" that Hagibis popularized, Hanopol heaped tons of sex to project the macho image of the group that he helped shape. In his own anthems—"Laki sa Layaw" and "Hoy, Hoy, Hoy, Mr. Kenkoy," Hanopol pounded sense into an aimless spirit that evoked the hippie era in which Hanopol had nurtured his musicality.

"That was the time of Juan de la Cruz in the '70s," he narrated. "The music was getting heavier. Jimi Hendrix was the thing. We were playing hardcore rock."

To a generation growing up on MTV and Baby Face, the '70s Juan de la Cruz band might be a pre-historic relic unearthed from an era where synthesizers and computer effects had yet to be invented. But to the likes of Hanopol, it was when real rock music was being played and when he grew his rock roots. It was also when he, as a starving artist, played the music that he loved.

"I experienced playing without pay when we were still Juan de la Cruz," he recalled. "To survive, I would buy lingerie wholesale from a *bumbay* and peddle it to stall owners in public markets. Even if the music did not pay, I saw to it that I could pay my way."

By then, he already had a family, for which he kicked the drug habit he acquired as a freewheeling rocker.

When he writes about the hard times of a musician ("Buhay Musikero"), Hanopol writes from experience. He embraced music as a child growing up in Leyte as the third of 10 children of Francisco and Dionisia Hanopol.

Crying in his sleep

He was in Grade 2 when he formed his own group, which played acoustic instruments to perform during caroling and town fiestas, and Hanopol sang Elvis Presley songs. He was always part of a group throughout grade school, and by the time the electric guitar became popular here, Hanopol had mastered his chords.

"I asked my mother to buy me an electric guitar," he said. "But my father was against

MIKE/2

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JUAN DE LA CRUZ

PINOY rock pioneers on the cover of an early LP

TODAY, still the unstoppable rocker

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JUAN DE LA CRUZ evolves. (From left) Wally Gonzales, Hanopol, and Joey Smith, just a little older.

Mike Hanopol, 58, still 'jeproks'...

From page 1

my music. He would lock the guitar away from me. My mother, however, always supported me."

One time, the young Hanopol asked his father permission to perform in a party. When the older Hanopol refused, his son waited for him to fall asleep and crept out of the house to join his band. Hanopol's father enrolled his son in a seminary.

"I was only 12, and I was scared to be left on my own with people I didn't know," Hanopol said. He cried in his sleep for a whole month undetected until a priest heard his sobs and consoled him. "The priest was Father Panero. When he heard me crying one night, he brought me to his room and read the Bible to me. Soon, I grew used to the seminary, and I formed a band there. We would play in all the seminary activities."

Six months after he left his son in the seminary, Hanopol's father returned to check on his progress.

"Oh, he's happy here," a priest told the older Hanopol, referring to the son. "In fact, he's got a band here."

Hanopol came home for summer and never went back to the seminary. He enrolled in San Beda College and found that the superior teaching in the seminary put him ahead of his high school class. "Except for Math, I was taking advance classes in all my subjects," he related.

Start of hardcore path

The following year, he had to transfer to Centro Escolar when his father, a government employee, found that he could not afford the tuition fee of San Beda.

"By that time, I had also formed Glenmore Combo," Hanopol said. The band, formed to promote a shoe brand, gave Hanopol his first professional experience. A year later, he joined the group Jungle Cats and met Wally Gonzales, who was playing lead for the band, and Nilo Santos, who was the vocalist. Hanopol played keyboards. Gonzales would become part of the original Juan de la Cruz Band, while Santos would manage Hanopol's career as a solo artist and produce a string of rock concerts he called New Moon Concert.

Nilo also shaped the image of Tessie Santos, his former wife, and turned her into Sampaguita.

Two years into Jungle Cats, the band played in a nightclub where Downbeats was also performing. In Downbeats was Pepe Smith, who had just returned to Manila after a gig in Hong Kong.

"Wally and I were pirated by the manager of Downbeats," Hanopol said. Downbeats was the beginning of Hanopol's hardcore path.

"Jimi Hendrix arrived," he said. With Hendrix's music came a contract to perform in Japan so that Hanopol, who was only a final exam short of a college degree in Psychology, quit school and broke his father's heart. "My father cried when I quit school," he said.

Forming the band Zero History, Hanopol went to Japan with Gonzales and Smith. But that stint was not idyllic for the group. "The manager of the club where we were supposed to perform expected us to play ballads," said Hanopol. "But we were rockers and did not want to do that, especially [Smith]. We were thrown out of the club and went to another club in Yokohama, where we played for seamen who appreciated our music."

Stabilizing force

Hanopol's team-up with Smith led to the band Speed, Glue and Shinky, which recorded a couple of albums for Sony Records of Japan. Hanopol was on the road with Smith and another musician to promote the albums in Japan. The next contract brought Hanopol to Taiwan for a year.

"Shortly before I was to leave for Manila, my passport was stolen, I think, by a girl who fell in love with me," said Hanopol. "Instead of helping me, police threw me in jail. A day later, I was deported to Manila."

Then he met Hermie, who would become his wife and the stabilizing force in his life. "When we got married in 1974, I stopped the drugs," he said. "I knew I would have children, and I didn't want them to witness the drug scene." Hanopol and Hermie had a daughter, Michelle, who is now a doctor.

Even as Hanopol outgrew the life laden with sex and drugs, he held on to the music and formed the first Juan de la Cruz Band with Edmund Fortuno on drums.

"When Pepe returned to Manila after another tour of Japan, he joined JDC and Edmund quit," Hanopol said. "Edmund formed another group, Anak Bayan."

JDC went on to record several albums for Vicor Music Corp. until the group broke up and Hanopol went solo.

Singing for Hagibis

In 1978, Hanopol went back to Vicor with an original song, which he asked Tito Sotto, then the label's Artist & Repertoire manager, to listen to. Sotto turned down the song and asked Hanopol if he had a salsa song instead.

"Me, do salsa? No way," Hanopol said, laughing. He brought the song to Jem Records head

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Mike Hanopol, 58, still…

From page 2

Willy Cruz and went home with a record deal for the album "Buhay Musikero," which had the carrier single, "Laki sa Layaw, Jeproks." While Hanopol was promoting the song on TV, Vic del Rosario, who then owned Vicor, asked him to move to Del Rosario's other record label, Blackgold. That move to Blackgold spawned another album, "Tulungan Natin" and he became A & R manager of the record company.

As Blackgold A & R manager in the '80s, he developed Hagibis and wrote songs for the group. He remembers that Al Tantay, Richard Merk and Richard Tan were among the batch that was considered to form Hagibis. But this did not pan out and the search for the men who would become Hagibis lagged behind the recording schedule.

"So I sang the songs myself," Hanopol said. "The record was done already by the time Sonny Parsons, Bernie Fineza and the rest came and became Hagibis. They lip-synched the songs in the first album. But they eventually sang in their second album."

In the meantime, his parents invited Hanopol to visit them in the US. He liked what he saw there and decided to immigrate. In 1982, he began to pursue his American dream. It meant a return to obscurity, playing in small clubs and singing cover versions of Billy Joel and Lionel Richie.

His wife Hermie remembers when Hanopol played as a one-man band, setting up his own instruments, packing up alone at the end of the 10 a.m.-3 p.m. set, and going to another club to play the music he really liked. It also meant selling steel pots and pans to the Filipino communities, in order to survive.

Ten years later, Hanopol returned to revive Juan de la Cruz in the album "Kahit Anong Mangyari" for Viva Records, which included the hits "Balong Malalim," "Beep, Beep, Beep," "Divisoria," among other hits.

"Before we could record the album, I first had to find Pepe," Hanopol said. "I'd written the songs and all he had to do was record them. I found him in Iloilo, then we moved on to Bohol before I could bring him back to Manila. Somebody wanted to shoot him dead so we had to take this roundabout route."

In his recording studio in his Manila home, Hanopol locked up Smith to keep him away from drugs, but supplied him with food and beer. "That was the only way I could make him finish recording the songs," Hanopol said, shaking his head.

Two weeks after Hanopol returned to Manila last December, he had yet to see Smith.

Hanopol hasn't changed, either. Still sporting his trademark beret and sequined vest, Hanopol might be leaner because of a fish diet, but he still struts like a rock artist, consumed by the wild sound of his music and the rough edges of his songs. Recently, he composed a song for the hunk group Masculados, "Lagot Ka," and intends to write more songs.

"*Ewan ko kung laos ako* [I don't know if I'm passé]," he mused. "I still perform, and I was able to fill up the venue when I performed in Aruba. That was 1,000 seats. In Houston, Texas, I was able to fill up 1,200 seats."

On the the future of Pinoy Rock, Mike Hanopol said, "Somebody has to come up with something new. Somebody has got to find the heart of Pinoy Rock. It's still there. Only, someone has to make it throb."

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3 WHITE NOISE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	8 MAD HOUSE 10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	9 RAISE YOUR VOICE 12 50 3:10 5:30 7 50 10:00
5 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00	10 NATIONAL TREASURE 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

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3 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50	6 RESERVE
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DE GARMO

Having fun is most important, 'AI' runner-up tells new batch

LAST YEAR'S "American Idol" runner-up, 16-year-old Diana DeGarmo, who recently released her debut solo album, has some advice for this year's crop of wannabes.

De Garmo told Launch Radio Networks that having a good time is a key part of being successful on the show.

"To the next American Idol candidates, I would definitely say—have fun, 'cause that is the very first and most important thing to the show," said De Garmo. "Because if you're having fun and you audience is having fun and the people watching are having fun, then they are going to vote for you obviously."

The fourth season of "American Idol" has started, with the two-part season premiere airing in Manila on Wednesday and yesterday.

The first two-hour episode focused on auditions that took place in Washington DC.

20-year-old CNN now reaches more than 1 billion consumers

CNN, "the world's news leader," marks its 25th anniversary, and CNN International's 20th, this year.

From eight bureaus in 1980 to 37 in 2004, CNN now reaches more than a billion consumers around the world, from the initial 1.7 million US households.

To celebrate this milestone, the network will run throughout the year a review of its top stories and interviews. Every month will have a different "Top 25" feature—people who have influenced the course of events worldwide, and defining moments in world sports, politics, arts, culture, and entertainment.

Here's a sampling of the list:

1980—June, CNN signs on. September, Iran-Iraq war erupts. December, John Lennon is killed.

1981—March, President Ronald Reagan is shot. July, Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer are married.

1982—April, Argentina invades the Falklands.

1984—April, the AIDS virus is discovered. December, Bhopal chemical disaster.

1985—July, "Live Aid," a fund-raising concert for victims of the famine in Ethiopia, is held in London.

1986—January, Space Shuttle Challenger disaster.

1988—December, Pan Am 103 explodes over Lockerbie, Scotland.

1989—June, protest in Tiananmen Square, Beijing. November, fall of the Berlin Wall.

1990—February, Nelson Mandela is released from prison.

1991—September, USSR is dissolved. February, start of "Operation: Desert Storm" in Kuwait. CNN brings exclusive live pictures and news from Baghdad to the world.

1992—April, civil war breaks out in Bosnia.

1993—April, standoff in Waco, Texas ends.

1994—October, Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin win Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to create peace in the Middle East.

1995—April, Oklahoma City bombing. November, Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated.

1996—July, TWA 800 crashes in Atlantic.

1997—October, Asian Financial Crisis. August, death of Princess Diana. September, death of Mother Teresa.

1999—April, Columbine massacre. August, Turkish earthquake. September, Taiwan earthquake.

2000—September, attacks on World Trade Center and Pentagon.

2002—October, Bali bombings.

2003—March, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome epidemic breaks out in Asia; start of Iraq war.

2004—September, school hostage siege in Beslan, Russia. November, Death of Yasser Arafat. December, South Asian tsunami tragedy.

DEFINING MOMENTS. Among CNN's top stories in the past 20 years are (counterclockwise from above) the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980, the killing of Lennon in December the same year, and the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer in 1981.

WINSLET, in "Eternal Sunshine"

2 Best Actress nominations for Kate Winslet

KATE Winslet received two Best Actress nominations from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, while Martin Scorsese's "The Aviator" was up for 14 awards.

Winslet was nominated Monday for her leading roles in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" and "Finding Neverland." She faces competition from Imelda Staunton, who plays a housekeeper turned abortion practitioner in 1950s Britain in Mike Leigh's "Vera Drake," Ziyi Zhang for her turn in the martial arts epic "House of Flying Daggers" and Charlize Theron for her Oscar-winning role in "Monster."

Leonardo DiCaprio was nominated for Best Actor for his role as eccentric movie mogul Howard Hughes in "The Aviator," a performance that earned him a Golden Globe Sunday.

Other nominees in the category are fellow Golden Globe winner Jamie Foxx for "Ray," Gael Garcia Bernal for "The Motorcycle Diaries," Jim Carrey for "Eternal Sunshine Of the Spotless Mind" and Johnny Depp for "Finding Neverland."

Bafta winners will be announced Feb. 12.

The five nominees for Best Film are "The Aviator," "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," "Finding Neverland," "The Motorcycle Diaries" and "Vera Drake."

"Neverland" and "Vera Drake" had 11 nominations each.

AP

2 nominations, too, for 'gay' Farrel films

TWO Colin Farrell movies, "Alexander" and "A Home at the End of the World," were among the top film nominees announced Tuesday for the 16th annual media awards organized by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation .

"Alexander" and "Home" join "Kinsey," starring Liam Neeson, the Charlize Theron Oscar-winner "Monster," and the high-school satire "Saved!" as the nominees in the category of wide-release films.

In the limited-release category, the nominees are the Spanish-language "Bad Education," "Bear Cub," "Brother to Brother," "Blue Gate Crossing" and "The Mudge Boy"

The GLAAD Media awards will be handed out March 28 in New York, April 30 in Los Angeles and June 11 in San Francisco. Highlights will air on MTV Networks' new gay-themed cable channel Logo.

On the TV side, Best Drama Series nominees are: HBO's "Six Feet Under" and "The Wire," Showtime's "The L Word" and "Queer as Folk," and UPN's freshman series "Kevin Hill." NBC's "Will & Grace" was the lone nominee for Outstanding Comedy Series.

For Best Reality Program, nominees are the CBS pair of "Big Brother 5" and "Survivor: Vanuatu," Showtime's "American Candidate," Bravo's "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" and MTV's "The Real World: Philadelphia."

The television movie division includes CBS' "Blackwater Lightship" and Showtime's "Jack."

GLAAD will also present a Special Recognition Award to Comedy Central's "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart" for its "smart, incisive, devastatingly funny coverage of gay and lesbian civil rights issues, and its hilarious skewering of the religious right's anti-gay agenda."

Reuters

'LADIES in Lavender'

Two grand dames in 1

"LADIES in Lavender," a British drama starring Judi Dench and Maggie Smith, will be released in the United States this spring, distributor Roadside Attractions said.

Dench and Smith play two sisters living on the Cornwall coast who take in a young man (Daniel Bruhl) who has washed ashore.

The film marks the directorial debut of British actor Charles Dance , who has appeared in such movies as "Gosford Park" and "The Swimming Pool" He also wrote the film's screenplay based on William Locke's short story.

"We fell in love with this charming film, which gives audiences a rare chance to see these two beloved British 'dames' share the screen," said Howard Cohen, co-president of Roadside Attractions, one of the firms behind the fast-food exposé "Super Size Me."

Dench and Smith previously worked together in "Tea with Mussolini" (1999) and "Room with a View" (1985).

"Ladies in Lavender" was released in the United Kingdom in November and has grossed more than $5 million at the box office.

Reuters

JUDI Dench

MAGGIE Smith

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events! events!

JANUARY 21, 2005 (Friday)
Wazzup! Wazzup! Extra Strong Live Telecast
Presented by: Studio 23
7:00 - 8:00 PM, Activity Center

JANUARY 22, 2005 (Saturday)
Betrayers of Kamigawa Release Tournament
Presented by: Neutral Grounds
10:00 AM - 9:00 PM, Activity Center

Chevrolet Wish upon A Car Raffle Draw
Presented by:
Metro Department Store and Supermarket
3:00 - 6:00 PM, Central Plaza

JANUARY 23, 2005 (Sunday)
Star Cinema's Dreamboy Mall Show
5:00 PM, Activity Center